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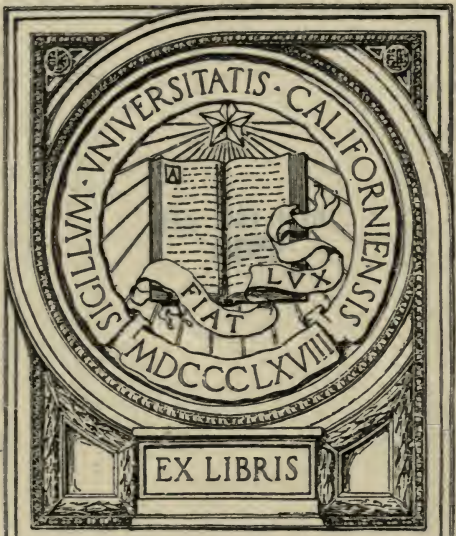

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To Harold Furgo.
with
Adkins Ashamis.
Aug 6—

Jan 27—1913

MISTRESS DAVENANT

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THE DARK LADY OF SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS

Demonstrating the identity of the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, and the authorship and satirical intention of *Willobie his Avisa*. With a reprint of *Willobie his Avisa* (in Part), *Penelope's Complaint*, *An Elegie*, *Constant Susanna*, *Queen Dido*, *Pyramus and Thisbe*, *The Shepherd's Slumber*, and sundry other poems by the same author.

BY

ARTHUR ACHESON

AUTHOR OF "SHAKESPEARE AND THE RIVAL POET"

LONDON
BERNARD QUARITCH
1913

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H. L. Leupp

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MAIN

TO MY WIFE

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

254488

I'd rather be a kitten and cry mew,
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers.
I'd rather hear a brazen canstick turned,
Or a dry wheel grate on the axle.
And these would set my teeth nothing on edge,
Nothing so much as mincing poetry.
'Tis like the forced gait of a shuffling nag.

Henry IV., Part I., III. i.

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ADVERTISEMENT

Outlining new facts concerning Shakespeare, his work, and his relations with certain of his contemporaries

IN the preface to a book published in 1903, entitled *Shakespeare and the Rival Poet of the Sonnets*, I suggested certain lines of Shakespearean investigation which seemed to promise more definite knowledge of Shakespeare the man, and, through the more intimate conception thus possibly to be gained of his personality, a clearer understanding of his life's work than had yet been realised either by textual criticism or antiquarian research. In that preface I wrote as follows:

"The research of text-students of the works of Shakespeare, undertaken with the object of unveiling the mystery which envelops the poet's life and personality, has added little or nothing of actual proof to the bare outlines which hearsay, tradition, and the spare records of his time have given us. It has, however, resulted in evolving several plausible conjectures, which, if followed and carried to the point of proof, would lend some form and semblance of his personality to these outlines, and materially assist in visualising for us the actual man. In this class of conjectural knowledge I would place the following questions: The question of the personal theory of the Sonnets, with its attendant questions of order and chronology, and the indentity of the three or four figures, the "Patron," "The Rival Poet," "The Dark Lady," and "The Mr. W. H." of the Dedication.

"I would also mention in this class the question of the chronology of the plays, for though we have fairly accurate data regarding a few of them, and plausible inferences for

nearly all of them, we cannot place an actual date for the first production of any one of them.

"Lastly, in this class and linked with the sonnet questions I would place the questions of the satirical intention and authorship of the poem called *Willobie his Avisa.* If any one or two of these things were actually proved, a new keynote to research would be struck, but at present these are all still matters of opinion and dispute."

In *Shakespeare and the Rival Poet* I followed a suggestion made in 1873 by Professor Minto, regarding George Chapman as "The Rival Poet" of the Sonnets, and, I believe, definitely proved Chapman's identity as that figure. My findings of that time are now generally accepted by Shakespearean scholars. Shortly after the publication of that book, I found convincing evidence that *Willobie his Avisa* actually was directed against Shakespeare, and that the conditions depicted in that poem concerning "H. W.," "W. S." and "Avisa" reflected, or caricatured, the state of affairs displayed in certain of the Sonnets which exhibit the involved relations of Shakespeare, his patron, and the Dark Lady. This I ascertained by identifying the previously unknown author of this poem as Mr. Matthew Roydon, George Chapman's intimate friend and associate. With this added knowledge, before long I achieved also the quest of the Dark Lady; whom I now identify as Mistress Davenant, afterwards hostess of the Crown Inn at Oxford.

The light thrown upon the Sonnets by the identification of the "Rival Poet" and the Dark Lady, entirely disposed of any question regarding their personal nature and also clearly indicated Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, as the patron to whom the larger number of them were addressed.

A careful examination of the sequential order of the Sonnets, made in the light of the new facts I had found regarding their personal nature, disclosed much contextual incoherence in Thorpe's order and made it plain that those written to Southampton were originally written at different periods and in seven *books;* each *book* containing twenty

Sonnets, and not, as has hitherto been supposed, in one or two long sequences. The task of giving them contextual order and rearranging them in their original *books* was made difficult by the fact that, of the original one hundred and forty Sonnets in the seven *books*, thirteen are now lost. Three of the original *books* are, however, still intact. Three more each lack two Sonnets, and one lacks seven for completion.

The attainment of these things, which had before been the goal of my endeavours, opened up such interesting possibilities of further discoveries in the plays, when considered from a subjective point of view, that I decided to defer publication of any portion of my evidence until I had fully investigated the plays of the Sonnet period. After about ten years of intermittent research, I have now carried my investigations down to the year 1601 and the death of Essex, the imprisonment of Southampton, and the complete ruin of their faction. This catastrophe marks the end of Shakespeare's period of Comedy.

The subject has expanded so widely and involves such an intimate consideration of the social and political conditions of that period, that some time may elapse before I have leisure to bring my investigations down to the close of Shakespeare's theatrical career. I have, therefore, decided to publish now, certain portions of my findings by which I claim to establish the identity of Matthew Roydon as the author of *Willobie his Avisa*, and of Mistress Davenant as the Dark Lady of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

While I defer publication of the results of my investigations of the plays made from a personal point of view, and also of my complete rearrangement of the Sonnets into their original *books*, for the guidance of the reader in following the present argument, I shall in this preface give a brief chronological outline of my fuller theory, without advancing detailed evidence in its support. This, for the present, the reader may, if he wishes, regard merely as a working hypothesis. Whether he does so or not — in the light of the evidence I adduce regarding Shakespeare's connection with the Earl

of Southampton, Matthew Roydon, Mistress Davenant, and others — will depend largely upon the intimacy of his own first-hand knowledge of Shakespeare and of the literary and political history of the reigns of Elizabeth and James.

The logical development of the evidence I possess regarding the personal nature of Shakespeare's Sonnets, when correlated with the underlying subjective interest in the plays of the Sonnet period, and with ascertainable facts concerning the lives of the several persons involved in the Sonnet story, makes it evident that the production of the Sonnets extended over a period of about seven years, beginning late in the year 1591, and ending late in 1598 or early in 1599. During these years the following poems and plays — all of which in a greater or less degree reflect incidents or conditions of the lives of Shakespeare and his friends — were also originally composed, and in approximately the order given:

Edward III, *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *King John*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Love's Labour's Won*, (*All's Well That Ends Well* in its earliest form), *Venus and Adonis*, The First Book of Sonnets, *Richard II*, Second Book of Sonnets, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Lucrece*, Third Book of Sonnets, *Henry IV*, *Part I*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, Fourth Book of Sonnets; about six months later the Fifth Book of Sonnets, *The Merchant of Venice*, Sixth Book of Sonnets, *The Lover's Complaint*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Henry IV*, *Part II*, Seventh Book of Sonnets, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Henry V*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*.

While the revelations of the Sonnets suggest the original composition of these plays in the order named, many were revised and some of them practically rewritten in later years. Where these revisions were made within the Sonnet period, the subjective evidence often accounts for the revision as well as for the original production of the play, and also makes it apparent that in the three years intervening between the composition of *Romeo and Juliet*, late in 1594, and the composition of *The Merchant of Venice*, late in 1597,

Shakespeare produced no new play, and that his dramatic work during this period consisted wholly in the revision of his earlier work. It is demonstrable that the following plays were drastically revised during this period: *Richard III*, *King John*, *Richard II*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Henry IV*, *Part I*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

In *Titus Andronicus*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the three parts of *Henry VI*, I find no subjective significance. These plays were originally written by other hands, anterior to the beginning of Shakespeare's Sonnet period, and, becoming the property of the theatrical company to which Shakespeare was attached, were revised by him and others who preceded and succeeded him in the capacity of reviser and adapter for his company.

Titus Andronicus, while credited to Shakespeare by Meres, reveals little, if any, of his work. *The Taming of the Shrew* shows early as well as late revision by Shakespeare, and also gives evidence of still later revision by Fletcher or others, who, after Shakespeare had retired from London, succeeded him as adapter for his company. Shakespeare's revisionary work in the three parts of *Henry VI*, was evidently all done in or later than the year 1592, with the object of linking these plays dramatically and historically with his own English historical dramatisations. In the form in which they have come down to us in the Folio, the three parts of *Henry VI* contain not only the revisionary work of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and possibly others, but also a large amount of the original matter which the revisers intended to delete.

An adequate interpretation of the poems and plays of the Sonnet period can be attained only by keeping constantly in mind the facts of Shakespeare's personal relations during those years with the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, and also with the Earl of Southampton, and his consequent political sympathies with the Court faction led by the Earl of Essex, with which Southampton was so closely affiliated. I can adduce good evidence that Shakespeare first made his patron's acquaintance in about September,

1591, upon the occasion of the Queen's progress to Cowdray House in Surrey, the home of Southampton's maternal grandfather.

It is probable that Shakespeare and his company were engaged by the Earl of Southampton, or Sir Thomas Heneage, Vice-Chamberlain of the Court, to entertain the Queen upon that occasion, and also upon her visit a week later to Tichfield House, Southampton's Hampshire residence. Within a few months of this progress, with its experiences still in mind, Shakespeare composed *Love's Labour's Lost*, which palpably reflects incidents of the Queen's stay at Cowdray Park. At about the same period he also composed *Love's Labour's Won* (*All's Well That Ends Well*, in its early form), which in turn reflects incidents and conditions of her visit to Tichfield. This latter play was revised and its title changed late in 1598, again reflecting phases of Southampton's life at the later period.

During the engagement of Shakespeare and his company at Cowdray and Tichfield, our poet received inspiration for the composition of *Venus and Adonis;* which, with his first *book* of Sonnets, was written in 1592 for the Earl of Southampton, with the intention of inclining his mind towards the match planned for him by Lord Burghley with his granddaughter, Elizabeth Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford. The Queen's progress to Cowdray and Tichfield was undoubtedly arranged by Burghley with the intention of forwarding the consummation of this engagement. It is likely that Shakespeare made the acquaintance of Arthur Golding upon the occasion of this progress, or at least that Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was brought to his notice at this time. All critics are agreed that the 10th Book of Golding's translation was Shakespeare's source for the composition of *Venus and Adonis;* but it has never before been noticed in this connection that Golding was Elizabeth Vere's granduncle and tutor. It is probable that he accompanied his grandniece and pupil upon this important occasion. A comparison of *Venus and Adonis* with the first *book* of Sonnets — the bulk of which are

numbered from one to seventeen in Thorpe's order — shows that both poems were written at about the same period and with the same object in view.

Late in 1591, or early in 1592, Shakespeare, at the instigation of the Earl of Southampton, or the Earl of Essex, rewrote or transposed the old play of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John* into the play now known as *King John.* The old play, by an unknown author, was written in about 1588, at the time of the Armada, when anti-Catholic feeling was high. Its intention was to arouse sympathy for the cause of Sir John Perrott, a natural son of King Henry VIII, and Queen Elizabeth's half-brother, who, in this year, was recalled in disgrace from the Vice-Royalty of Ireland, through the influence of his bitter enemy Sir Christopher Hatton. Perrott was committed to the charge of Lord Burghley and was practically a prisoner at his house until the year 1591, when his enemies had so skilfully substantiated the charges against him that he was removed to the Tower on a charge of high treason. The old play of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John* was published at this time, and evidently with the same intention as that with which it was originally written.

Sir John Perrott's son, Sir Thomas Perrott, had a short time before eloped with, and married, Dorothy Devereaux, sister of the Earl of Essex. It is apparent then that the sympathies of Essex and his faction would be with Perrott.

In his transposition of the old play, Shakespeare, to reinforce its subjective purpose, exalts and magnifies the character of Falconbridge; strongly accentuating his loyalty to his sovereign, and making him substantially the protagonist of the action. In the vivid and striking picture of Falconbridge, the personality and character of Perrott are plainly to be recognized. Perrott died in the Tower while under sentence of death, pronounced by a subservient council on this trumped-up charge of treason. It was rumored that the Queen intended to pardon him had he lived.

In the autumn of 1592 — just one year after Southampton and Shakespeare had been drawn together — Southampton's

affair with the Dark Lady had its inception. In the month of September he accompanied the Queen and Court on a progress to Oxford. In view of the crowded condition of accommodations in that city during the stay of the Court, it is evident that many of the younger courtiers would lodge at the better inns, and likely that Southampton rested at the George Inn on Cornmarket Street, which, at that period, was conducted by John Davenant and his attractive wife. In 1604 they removed to the Crown Inn, which also was situated on Cornmarket Street, a short distance away. I have reason to believe that Southampton was accompanied upon this visit to Oxford by John Florio, who for over a year had been connected with the young Earl in the capacity of tutor of languages.

A period of about a year now intervened before Shakespeare and his patron again resumed their intimacy. During this estrangement Shakespeare composed *Richard II*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and *Henry IV*, *Part I*. Both *Richard II* and *Henry IV* were, however, afterwards materially revised. At this same period he also revised *Edward III*, introducing the King and the Countess act and a few other linking portions. This play is, I believe, in its entirety the work of Shakespeare; its earliest form, however, antedates his acquaintance with Southampton. The second *book* of Sonnets pertains also to this time. All of the poems and plays mentioned reveal Shakespeare's dissatisfaction with affairs at this period. The melancholy of *Richard II* is re-echoed in the second *book* of Sonnets. The treachery of Proteus to Valentine depicts Southampton's unfaithfulness to Shakespeare. As *Venus and Adonis*, a year or so earlier, was intended to incite the mind of his patron to amatory considerations, with the intention of forwarding his marriage; so now, *Lucrece* is intended to depict for his benefit the stultifying effect of unbridled lust.

The revision of *Edward III*, with the incorporation of the King and the Countess act, was made with a similar object. In *Henry IV*, *Part I*, the relations of the Prince and Falstaff reflect Southampton's intimacy with the witty but unprin-

cipled Florio. "My hostess of the tavern" is the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, Mistress Davenant of the George Inn. Though this play was very thoroughly revised for publication in 1598, at the same period that *Henry IV, Part II* was in process of composition, it is significant that the hostess in the later play is an old and garrulous widow. In the earlier play she is a young and beautiful married woman; yet she is "Mistress Quickly" in both plays. The developed history will fully account for the change in portrayal.

All of the poems and plays mentioned above were composed between the end of 1592, and the early months of 1594. The second *book* of Sonnets was composed after May, 1593, while Shakespeare travelled with his company in the provinces, owing to the closing of the theatres in London on account of the plague, which was then prevalent there.

Though I do not intend at present to publish my entire rearrangement of the Sonnets, I will give some of the complete *books*, in order that the interested reader may compare their sequential sense with the comparative lack of it in Thorpe's arrangement.

SECOND BOOK OF SONNETS

(1593)

Book II
Sonnet I

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek, my weary travel's end,
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,
'Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!'
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
(L—Thorpe) As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide;
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind;
My grief lies onward, and my joy behind.

Book II
Sonnet II

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer when from thee I speed:
From where thou art why should I haste me thence?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow?
(LI—Thorpe) Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know:
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace;
Therefore desire, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh — no dull flesh — in his fiery race;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade;
Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
Towards thee I'll run and give him leave to go.

Book II
Sonnet III

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way;
For then, despite of space, I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the farthest earth removed from thee;
(XLIV—Thorpe) For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But, ah, thought kills me, that I am not thought,
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that, so much of earth and water wrought,
I must attend time's leisure with my moan;
Receiving nought by elements so slow
But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

Book II
Sonnet IV

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
(XLV—Thorpe) My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
I send them back again, and straight grow sad.

Book II
Sonnet V

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
(XXX—Thorpe) And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

Book II
Sonnet VI

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have supposed dead;
And there reigns love, and all love's loving parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
(XXXI—Thorpe) As interest of the dead, which now appear
But things removed that hidden in thee lie!
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their parts of me to thee did give:
That due of many now is thine alone:
Their images I loved I view in thee,
And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

Book II
Sonnet VII

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
(XXXIX—Thorpe) That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain!

Book II
Sonnet VIII

Since I left you mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about
Doth part his function and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectually is out;
For it no form delivers to the heart
Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch:
(CXIII—Thorpe) Of his quick object hath the mind no part,
Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature,
The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
The crow or dove, it shapes them to your feature:
Incapable of more, replete with you,
My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.

Book II
Sonnet IX

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?
Or whether shall I say, mine eye saith true,
And that your love taught it this alchemy,
To make of monsters and things indigest
Such cherubins as your sweet self resemble,
(CXIV—Thorpe) Creating every bad a perfect best,
As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
O, 'tis the first; 'tis flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up:
Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin
That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

Book II
Sonnet X

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
(XXIV—Thorpe) Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

Book II
Sonnet XI

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart they picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,
(XLVI—Thorpe) But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impanneled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part:
As thus; mine eye's due is thine outward part,
And my heart's right thine inward love of heart.

Book II
Sonnet XII

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast
And to the painted banquet bids my heart;
(XLVII—Thorpe) Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me;
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

Book II
Sonnet XIII

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
(XLIII—Thorpe) To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
By looking on thee in the living day,
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
All days are nights to see till I see thee,
And nights bright days when dreams do show thee me.

Book II
Sonnet XIV

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
(XXVII—Thorpe) And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.
Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself no quiet find.

Book II
Sonnet XV

How can I then return in happy plight,
That am debarr'd the benefit of rest?
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But day by night, and night by day, oppress'd?
And each, though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me;
(XXVIII—Thorpe) The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the day, to please him thou art bright,
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven:
So flatter I the swart-complexion'd night;
When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
And night doth nightly make grief's strength seem stronger.

Book II
Sonnet XVI

Is it thy will thy image should keep open
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadows like to thee do mock my sight?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home into my deeds to pry,
(LXI—Thorpe) To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenour of thy jealousy?
O, no! thy love, though much, is not so great:
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake;
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:
For thee watch I whilst thou doth wake elsewhere,
From me far off, with others all too near.

Book II
Sonnet XVII

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure;
(LXXV—Thorpe) Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure:
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,
And by and by clean starved for a look;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

Book II
Sonnet XVIII

How careful was I, when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust!
But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
(XLVIII—Thorpe) Thou, best of dearest and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.
Thee have I not lock'd up in any chest,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my breast,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
And even thence thou wilt be stol'n, I fear,
For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

Book II
Sonnet XIX

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
The which he will not every hour survey,
For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
(LII—Thorpe) Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as my chest,
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
To make some special instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.
Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope,
Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to hope.

Book II
Sonnet XX

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
(XXVI—Thorpe) But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee;
Till then not show my head where thou mayst prove me.

Shortly after the composition of the second *book* of Sonnets, Shakespeare became fully cognizant of Southampton's entanglement with the Dark Lady. In the light of this knowledge he composed *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Lucrece*, and the third *book* of Sonnets: the play and poem mentioned adumbrate the actual confession and revelations of this *book* of Sonnets. I am convinced that all of Shakespeare's Sonnets, both those addressed to the Earl of Southampton and those written to the Dark Lady, were originally written in sequences of twenty. Of the third *book* written to Southampton, only twelve Sonnets have come down to us. Being the most crucial and intimate of the seven *books* written to his patron (which we know were passed amongst Southampton's friends to be read), it is likely that the missing Sonnets were detached by their recipient and withheld from circulation, or else purposely destroyed.

The third *book* of Sonnets was undoubtedly written before May, 1594, at which time Southampton and Shakespeare had again resumed confidential relations. *Lucrece*, with its friendly dedication, was published in this month, and *Midsummer Night's Dream* was presented for the first time upon May 2d, at the marriage festivities of Sir Thomas Heneage and Lady Southampton, for which occasion it was written. It was revised, in or about, 1596, shortly after the attempted second publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, and again revised about February, 1599, for presentation at the festivities planned at that time for the marriage of the Earl of Rutland to Lady Elizabeth Sidney, stepdaughter of the Earl of Essex. This marriage, however, was deferred until the autumn of that year, when Shakespeare's dramatic aid was again invoked; when he composed *Much Ado About Nothing,* which reflects in its action the deferred marriage, and the return of Essex and his friends from the inglorious Irish campaign.

While cordial relations were resumed between Shakespeare and his patron in the early Summer of 1594, they were not much together until late in the Autumn of that year. In about May, 1594, Southampton appears to have met

and fallen in love with Elizabeth Vernon, a cousin of his friend the Earl of Essex. His engagement to Lord Burghley's granddaughter was disrupted at, or shortly before, this time, as Elizabeth Vere became engaged in April or May to the young Earl of Derby, to whom she was married in December of the same year. It is obvious that much of the Queen's subsequent opposition to Southampton's marriage to Elizabeth Vernon arose from Burghley's influence. It is not probable that he would soon forgive Southampton's treatment of his favourite granddaughter.

A portion of the interval of separation between Southampton and Shakespeare, from May to December, 1594, was spent by Southampton in Hampshire, where he became involved in the resurgence of a family feud that existed between two of his neighbors. A duel between Sir Henry Long and Sir Charles Danvers developed before its close into a fight between the relations and retainers of the principals, in which Sir Henry Long was slain by Sir Henry Danvers; who, with his brother, took refuge with the Earl of Southampton at Whitely Lodge, where he was living at that time. By Southampton's assistance, the Danvers succeeded in passing over into France before a warrant for their arrest could be served. The origin of this feud is unknown, but its activity at this time arose from a haphazard quarrel between the retainers of the two families, in which a servant of the Danvers was slain. I cannot learn where this incident occurred, but it was evidently in London in the preceding Winter, as we have record that Sir Henry Danvers was confined in the Marshalsea at that time nursing a wound in his hand received in a recent brawl.

Late in the year 1594, Shakespeare composed his fourth *book* of Sonnets, celebrating the renewal of his friendship with Southampton; and — still continuing to suggest phases of his patron's life in his dramatic work — produced also *Romeo and Juliet*, which, in the factional quarrels between the Montagues and Capulets, reproduces the spirit and reflects the incidents and persons of the feud between the Danvers and the Longs. The prototypes for the dashing

and fiery characters of Mercutio and Benvolio, which are entirely lacking in both the Italian original and the English translations of the story from which Shakespeare worked, are palpable in the persons of Sir Charles and Sir Henry Danvers. Southampton is Romeo; Juliet is Elizabeth Vernon; the dark eyed Rosaline is the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. A comparison of Shakespeare's play with the Italian story, or with Brooke's translation, will show that his divergences were all the result of these subjective influences. This play was first produced upon December 7, 1594, at the Savoy Palace, the official residence of Sir Thomas Heneage, where he and his wife, the Countess of Southampton, entertained the Queen on that date. It was written with the object of softening the Queen's opposition to the marriage of Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon, by depicting the disastrous possibilities in a case where the love of a youthful, impetuous and high-spirited couple is stemmed in its natural course by the unsympathetic exercise of arbitrary power. In the next and following years the influence of Essex and others of their friends was brought to bear upon the Queen to obtain her consent, but without avail. Her continued obduracy resulted in much unhappiness to the lovers and finally drove them to a clandestine marriage in 1598. Their fortunes in the meantime are reflected in the revision and composition of other of Shakespeare's poems and plays, which I shall outline in due course.

The composition of *Romeo and Juliet* and the fourth *book* of Sonnets marks the happiest stage of Shakespeare's relations with his patron. Towards the end of 1591, and continuing through 1592, the countenance and friendship of this charming and accomplished young aristocrat had given its first inspiration to Shakespeare's previously dormant genius, which, however, was soon clouded and chilled by his friend's misbehaviour, under the malign influence of Florio. In the following Sonnet Shakespeare expressed his early happiness and his ensuing disappointment.

> Full many a glorious morning have I seen,
> Flatter the mountain top with sovereign eye,

Painting with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace.
E'en so one early morn my sun did shine,
With all triumphant splendour on my brow;
But out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now.

The time described in these lines as "one hour" was the interval between the Cowdray progress, in September, 1591, and Southampton's visit to Oxford one year later, when, evidently through Florio, he made the acquaintance of Mistress Davenant.

By the month of May, 1594, Southampton's temporary infatuation for the Dark Lady was ended and his affections were now centered upon Elizabeth Vernon. He and Shakespeare had become reconciled by this time; *Lucrece*, with its cordial and grateful dedication, being entered upon the Stationer's Registers in this month.

During the early months of 1594, while our poet and his patron were still estranged, George Chapman, at the instigation and with the help of his friend, John Florio, made his first poetical advances towards Southampton's favor. His *Hymns to the Shadow of Night* were submitted to the young Earl in the hope of winning his patronage. In the meantime *Lucrece* was published, and Shakespeare and Southampton were reunited. Chapman's poems in manuscript were read and criticised by Shakespeare, and Southampton's sponsorship for their publication evidently refused. Chapman, thereupon, published them, dedicating them to his friend and fellow scholar, Matthew Roydon. In this dedication he savagely attacked Shakespeare, to whom he refers in the capacity of "reader" to a nobleman. I have convincing evidence that Shakespeare had read these poems of Chapman's and their glossary at the time he composed *Midsummer Night's Dream*. He must, therefore, have read them in

manuscript, as they were not published until late in the year 1594. While this is the earliest record I can trace of hostility between Chapman and Shakespeare, it appears probable that Roydon and Shakespeare had come at odds, as early as the date of the Cowdray progress in 1591. The publication of Chapman's poems, dedicated to Roydon, for the present gave Shakespeare full assurance of his patron's fidelity. From certain expressions in the dedication of *Lucrece* and coincident evidence in the fourth *book* of Sonnets and elsewhere, I am of the opinion that Southampton bestowed some signal mark of his favour upon Shakespeare at about the time of their reconciliation. The fame of his bounty to Shakespeare at this time drew many poets to Southampton's shrine and so aroused the jealousy of Chapman and Roydon, that they planned a further attack upon our poet, with the object of disrupting his relations with his patron; while Chapman at the same time prepared new matter with which to appeal to Southampton's taste and favour.

Willobie his Avisa was written some time between May and September, 1594, and entered upon the Stationer's Registers in September of that year. Its publication was made before December, in which month *Romeo and Juliet* was first performed. Several passages in *Romeo and Juliet* give evidence, that at the time of its composition, Shakespeare had read *Willobie his Avisa.*

Though this poem was entered upon the Stationer's Registers in September, 1594, and issued from the press before the end of the year, the scandal had not become fully disseminated, nor its ill effects been felt by Shakespeare, at the time he produced *Romeo and Juliet* and the fourth *book* of Sonnets. These two compositions bespeak the happiness and exhilaration experienced by Shakespeare in his restored relations with Southampton, and also evidence in the fullest degree the inspiration to his poetic genius exerted by his affection and admiration for this princely youth. The remarkable resemblance in diction and spirit between portions of *Romeo and Juliet* and several of the Sonnets in this *book*, has frequently been noticed by critics, who had no hope that

an identical date for their composition might be demonstrated. The fourth *book* of Sonnets, which follows, was written late in the Autumn of 1594. Two Sonnets are lacking to make this *book* a complete twenty Sonnet sequence. I am of the opinion that the lost Sonnets were the first and second of the sequence, which, lacking them, now begins somewhat abruptly. The lines,

> Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
> To speak of that which gives thee all thy might,

evidently refer to an allusion made in a preceding Sonnet to the writer's neglect of his patron or the prolonged silence of his muse. No hiatus will be found in the sequential sense of the eighteen Sonnets which follow.

FOURTH BOOK OF SONNETS

(1594)

Book IV
Sonnet III

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
(C—Thorpe) Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there;
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

Book IV
Sonnet IV

What's in the brain, that ink may character,
Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit?
What's new to speak, what new to register,
That may express my love, or thy dear merit?
Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same;
(CVIII—Thorpe) Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallowed thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page;
Finding the first conceit of love there bred,
Where time and outward form would show it dead.

Book IV
Sonnet V

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming;
I love not less, though less the show appear:
That love is merchandized whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays;
(CII—Thorpe) As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

Book IV
Sonnet VI

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
(LVI—Thorpe) To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view;
Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd, more rare.

Book VI
Sonnet VII

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen:
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
(XCVII—Thorpe) Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

Book IV
Sonnet VIII

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
(XCVIII—Thorpe) Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

Book IV
Sonnet IX

The forward violet thus did I chide:
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
(XCIX—Thorpe) And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair;
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
But sweet or colour it had stol'n from thee.

Book IV
Sonnet X

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
(LIII—Thorpe) On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

Book IV
Sonnet XI

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
(LIV—Thorpe) Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall fade, my verse distills your truth.

Book IV
Sonnet XII

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends
For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed?
Both truth and beauty on my love depends;
So dost thou too, and therein dignified.
Make answer, Muse: wilt thou not haply say,
'Truth needs no colour, with his colour fix'd;
(CI—Thorpe) Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay;
But best is best, if never intermix'd'?
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuse not silence so, for 't lies in thee
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb
And to be praised of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office, Muse; I teach thee how
To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

Book IV
Sonnet XIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
(XVIII—Thorpe) And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

Book IV
Sonnet XIV

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phœnix in her blood;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
(XIX—Thorpe) To the wide world and all her fading sweets;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:
O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
Yet do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
My love shall in my verse ever live young.

Book IV
Sonnet XV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
(CIV—Thorpe) Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred;
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

Book IV
Sonnet XVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
(CVI—Thorpe) I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
For we, which now behold these present days,
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

Book IV
Sonnet XVII

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
(CVII—Thorpe) Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
And thou in this shalt find thy monument
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

Book IV
Sonnet XVIII

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,
And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
(LXIV—Thorpe) And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay;
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminate,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

Book IV
Sonnet XIX

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
(LXV—Thorpe) When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

Book IV
Sonnet XX

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme!
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
(LV—Thorpe) Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

It was suggested by Gerald Massey, that the fifteenth Sonnet in this book, (Thorpe 107), was a single gratulatory poem written by Shakespeare in 1603, to celebrate Southampton's liberation from the Tower, upon the accession of James I. A very casual examination of its relations to the contexts I have given it, will show it to be an integral portion of the book. If this Sonnet was written in 1603, the remainder of the sequence must also have been written at that time. Gerald Massey assumes that the allusion to "the mortal moon" having endured an eclipse, is to the death of Queen Elizabeth. Dr. Tyler suggested that this Sonnet was written in 1598, and that it referred to the recent escape of Elizabeth from an attempt upon her life, and that it also made reference to the Peace of Vervins established in that year. I can prove both of these opinions untenable, and can give convincing evidence for the date I assign to the sequence. The allusion to the escape of the Queen from a recent peril, and also to a rumored peace, aptly fits the facts regarding domestic and international happenings late in 1594.

The publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, partially accomplished the purpose had in mind regarding Shakespeare by Roydon and his fellow conspirators. Though they did not succeed permanently in estranging the peer and the poet, or in winning Southampton's patronage for themselves, they at least put an end for a period to his public intimacy with Shakespeare. Southampton was at this time upon an equivocal footing at Court, and could ill afford the publication of a scandal, linking his name with that of a play actor, and with an innkeeper's wife, under the conditions depicted in the story recently published. He had lately jilted the favourite granddaughter of the Prime Minister, and was now endeavouring to win the Queen's consent to a marriage with a cousin of that Minister's principal political opponent. Several fruitless attempts to gain the Queen's sanction were made in 1595. Under these circumstances, Southampton or his friends apparently thought it advisable that he should forego his intimacy with Shakespeare for a time.

Finding that the publication of Roydon's poem had apparently succeeded in estranging Southampton from Shakespeare, and assuming that it was the amorous or erotic nature of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* that had attracted Southampton, and won his liberal patronage, Chapman, who had previously condemned Shakespeare's supposed eroticism, now attempted to suit Southampton's tastes and pander to his imagined libidinousness by writing several poems of a lascivious nature. Late in 1594, or early in 1595, he composed *Ovid's Banquet of Sense, The Amorous Zodiac* and *A Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy.* These poems, as in the case of *The Hymns to the Shadow of Night,* were submitted for Southampton's approval, and being again refused, were published in 1595, and, as in the case of the earlier poems, also dedicated to his friend Roydon. Both in these poems and their dedication, Chapman casts slurs at Shakespeare, of a still more open and indicative nature than those contained in his earlier publication.

Shakespeare, though separated from Southampton, becoming cognizant of his enemies' attempts upon his favour, now produced his fifth *book* of Sonnets, in which he definitely indicates Chapman as his rival. In this *book* we again have a complete twenty Sonnet sequence. The sequential coherence of these verses is very palpable.

THE FIFTH BOOK OF SONNETS

Book V
Sonnet I

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Call'd to that audit by advised respects;
Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye,
(XLIX—Thorpe) When love, converted from the thing it was,
Shall reasons find of settled gravity;
Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert,
And this my hand against myself uprear,
To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:
To leave poor me thou hast the strength of laws,
Since why to love I can allege no cause.

Book V
Sonnet II

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
XXXVIII Thorpe) Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted;
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory:
And I by this will be a gainer too;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.

Book V
Sonnet III

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence:
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt,
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired change,
(LXXXIX Thorpe) As I'll myself disgrace; knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look strange;
Be absent from thy walks; and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.
For thee, against myself I'll vow debate,
For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.

Book V
Sonnet IV

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe;
(XC—Thorpe) Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come: so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might;
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

Book V
Sonnet V

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse;
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest:
(XCI—Thorpe) But these particulars are not my measure;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost,
Of more delight than hawks or horses be;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast:
Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
All this away and me most wretched make.

Book V
Sonnet VI

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end.
(XCII—Thorpe) I see a better state to me belongs
Than that which on thy humour doth depend:
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!
But what's so blessed-fair that fears no blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

Book V
Sonnet VII

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband; so love's face
May still seem love to me, though alter'd new;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place:
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change.
(XCIII—Thorpe) In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles strange,
But heaven in thy creation did decree
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell.
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show.

Book V
Sonnet VIII

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend;
All tongues, the voice of souls, give thee that due,
Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward praise is crown'd;
But those same tongues, that give thee so thine own,
(LXIX—Thorpe) In other accents do this praise confound
By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds;
Then, churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were kind,
To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
The soil is this, that thou dost common grow.

Book V
Sonnet IX

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse,
And found such fair assistance in my verse,
As every alien pen hath got my use,
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
(LXXVIII Thorpe) Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine and born of thee:
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

Book V
Sonnet X

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
(XXXVIII Thorpe) For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?
Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invocate;
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.
If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

Book V
Sonnet XI

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen;
(LXXIX—Thorpe) Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word
For thy behaviour; beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee thou thyself dost pay.

Book V
Sonnet XII

O, how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
(LXXX—Thorpe) My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly pride:
Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this; my love was my decay.

Book V
Sonnet XIII

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise;
(LXXXII—Thorpe) And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days,
And do so, love; yet when they have devised
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathized
In true plain words by thy true-telling friend;
And their gross painting might be better used
Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abused.

Book V
Sonnet XIV

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set;
I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt:
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself, being extant, well might show
(LXXXIII Thorpe) How far a modern quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, being dumb;
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life and bring a tomb.
There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
Than both your poets can in praise devise.

Book V
Sonnet XV

Who is it that says most? which can say more
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell
That to his subject lends not some small glory;
(LXXXIV Thorpe) But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.
You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse.

Book V
Sonnet XVI

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compiled,
Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry 'Amen'
(LXXXV—Thorpe) To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say ''Tis so, 'tis true,'
And to the most of praise add something more;
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
Then others for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

Book V
Sonnet XVII

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
(LXXXVI Thorpe) No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

Book V
Sonnet XVIII

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
(LXXXVII Thorpe) The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgement making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

Book V
Sonnet XIX

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
(XXXII—Thorpe) Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
'Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
    But since he died, and poets better prove,
    Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love.'

Book V
Sonnet XX

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
(LXXXI—Thorpe) The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead;
    You still shall live — such virtue hath my pen —
    Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths of men.

This *book* of Sonnets was written late in 1595, or early in 1596, as Shakespeare's personal appeal to his patron against his rival's advances. At the same time he publicly answered Roydon and Chapman by his first revision of *Love's Labour's Lost*, in which play he caricatured Chapman as Holofernes, and Matthew Roydon as the Curate Nathaniel. John Florio is also glanced at in the character of Armado. The additions made to the play at this period may readily be distinguished, as well as a few later additions, made shortly before its publication in 1598–99. The personal application of Shakespeare's ridicule was quickly recognised by his learned antagonists, and was answered within a few months by an attempted re-issue of *Willobie his Avisa*. No copies of the poem of this date are now known to exist. Its issue was prevented by the censor evidently before any copies had gone into circulation. In order more plainly to make known the object of his satire in *Willobie his Avisa*, Roydon, in this same year, published another poem entitled *Penelope's Complaint*, under the pseudonym of Peter Colse. In the preface and certain appendices to this poem he refers to *Willobie his Avisa* and the satire it contains, in such a manner as to make it clear that his intention is to arouse interest in its underlying personal significance.

In answer to Roydon's latest attack, Shakespeare now revised *Midsummer Night's Dream*, introducing or enlarging the play within the play, enacted by Bottom and his "rude mechanicals." The parody of Roydon's verses in this portion of the play is very palpable. That this parody was introduced into the play as late as, or later than 1596—the date of the publication of *Penelope's Complaint* — is evidenced by Shakespeare's reflection of the ballad maker "Peter Colse" in the character of the "base mechanical" ballad maker "Peter Quince."

Whatever other effect these poetical and dramatic recriminations may have had at this time, it is evident that they must have given greater publicity to the scandal regarding our poet and Mistress Davenant, and involving the Earl of Southampton. Both *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Midsum-*

mer Night's Dream, were originally written in the interests of the Earl of Southampton and his friends, and were primarily intended for private presentation. In their revised form, they were no doubt exhibited upon the public boards. While the underlying personal reflections in them might not be recognised by the public, they were plain to the initiated.

For the next two years Southampton saw little of Shakespeare, but seems at this period to have come much in contact with and under the influence of John Florio. In 1596, he was absent from England for several months with the fleet, on the expedition to Cadiz. Shortly after his return from this adventure, he travelled for a few months on the Continent; Florio probably accompanying him. His travels were interrupted by the preparations being made in England for another attack upon Spain. He returned to England before June, 1597, and sailed with Essex upon the Island Voyage in that month, returning again to England early in October, 1597. Between the Spring of 1596, and the Autumn of 1597, Shakespeare, while not actually estranged from Southampton, as in 1592–94, was yet neglected by his patron. Lacking the inspiration of this companionship and friendship, as well as Southampton's demand for his work for private performance, our poet now devoted himself to the revision of his earlier work for public purposes. *Richard II*, *King John* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* were all revised during 1596; *Love's Labour's Lost* in 1595, *Richard III* and *Henry IV Part I* in 1597.

In September, 1596, Shakespeare's son, Hamnet, died. In July, 1597, The Theatre (where his company had now performed for some time) was closed by order of the authorities and was never afterwards reopened. During this same period he also became deeply involved with the Dark Lady. The resultant depression and remorse engendered by those adverse moral influences and material conditions, found expression, towards the end of 1597, in the composition of the sixth *book* of Sonnets; following the return of Southampton from the Island Voyage. *The Merchant of Venice*, which echoes the spiritual dejection of this *book* of Sonnets, was

composed at the same period. Shakespeare is Antonio; Southampton, his preoccupied friend Bassanio, intent on winning Portia—Elizabeth Vernon. This play, like all his early Comedies, was written for Southampton and for private presentation. In the interval between the closing of The Theatre in July, 1597, and the opening of The Globe in the summer of 1599, Shakespeare and his company, when in London, performed almost exclusively at The Blackfriars, and for select audiences. Their lease of these premises was obtained on the condition that it be maintained as a private theatre. Though the terms of this lease were infringed in later years by other companies to whom the Burbages leased The Blackfriars after the opening of The Globe, I have fair evidence to show that the Lord Chamberlain's company lived up to its requirements while they performed there between the Winter of 1597–8 and the Summer of 1599.

The Autumn and Winter of 1597–98 marks a temporary renewal of intimate relations between Shakespeare and Southampton. All of the plays revised or composed at this time, and for a year later, were written and improved for private performance either at The Blackfriars, the Court, or the houses of Southampton and his friends. All of them also reflect our poet's connection with Southampton and the Essex faction, or his antagonism to Chapman and his clique.

In the same year that The Theatre was closed and Shakespeare and his company were temporarily compelled to travel in the provinces, he purchased New Place in Stratford. This purchase, and the financial loss involved in the closing of The Theatre, evidently straitened our poet's means and curtailed his income for a period. I advance the opinions, that the publication of several of his plays in this, and the following year, were, to a large extent, the result of pecuniary considerations, and that all but one of these Quartos were published with his cognizance. None of his plays were published before 1597. *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *Henry IV Part I*, were published in 1597–98, and in

practically the same form that they later appeared in the Folio. They all show careful editing and were all fathered by the same publisher, Andrew Wise. It is probable that the ready sale which these apparently authorised publications met, (*Richard II* running into two editions in one year), led to the surreptitious issue of *Romeo and Juliet* at this time. The fact that the Quarto of 1597, of this play, differs so materially from that of 1599, and that it was issued by John Danter, while the more carefully edited publications of the same year were all issued by Andrew Wise, give good grounds for the assumption that it was published without Shakespeare's knowledge. The second Quarto of *Romeo and Juliet*, much enlarged and evidently carefully edited for publication, was issued by Cuthbert Burby in 1599. That this latter issue had Shakespeare's sanction appears evident from the fact that *Love's Labour's Lost*, in its latest and most complete form, was issued by this same publisher a few months earlier. I have convincing evidence to show that the Quarto publication of this latter play in 1598–99 was made at Shakespeare's instigation.

Though the publication of *Richard II*, *Richard III*, and *Henry IV*, in 1597–98, was probably due to financial reasons, certain of the plays issued at and following this period, were published aggressively or defensively against his antagonists, Florio, Chapman, Roydon and others, who in time rallied to their standard. The revision and publication of *Henry IV Part I*, in the beginning of 1598, with the character of Oldcastle changed to Falstaff, was directed against John Florio, who at once recognised Shakespeare's intention and replied to him abusively in his preface to *The Worlde of Wordes*, which was published later in the same year and dedicated to the Earl of Southampton. To Florio's abuse Shakespeare replied, by continuing the history of this reign and further developing the character of Falstaff. *Henry IV Part II*, was undoubtedly composed in, or about, December, 1598.

In this same year Chapman challenged the approval of the literary world with more important matter than any he

had yet published. Early in 1598, he published his *Seaven Bookes of Homer's Iliades*, dedicating it most fulsomely to the Earl of Essex; whereupon Shakespeare composed *Troilus and Cressida*, in which he travestied Homer and ridiculed Chapman. This play was never acted upon the public stage, in the form in which it was first produced. It was presented at least once, privately, at the Blackfriars, before a company composed of the Earl of Essex and his friends. Its performance was discontinued at Essex' request. While Shakespeare frequently indulged in double meanings of a political nature in the plot and action of his plays, in none is the parallel he draws so palpable as in this play, which, while primarily intended as ridicule of Chapman, was used incidentally as a warning to the Earl of Essex. The whole of Ulysses' speech in Act III, Scene III, beginning:—

> Time hath, my lord, a wallet at his back
> Wherein he puts alms for oblivion,

was Shakespeare's admonition to Essex, to abandon the peevish attitude he indulged in towards the Queen at this time, and also a warning to him that Cecil and his spies were fully aware of his illicit relations with certain ladies of the Court. Shakespeare and Essex' friends knew well that Cecil and his tools in their endeavours to undermine Essex with the Queen, could use no more effective weapon than this information. Other and more highly placed well-wishers than our poet, warned Essex of the disastrous results that might ensue should such knowledge reach the Queen. Lady Bacon pleaded with him in several letters that are extant. Francis Bacon, Sir Robert Sidney, and no doubt many others, warned him without avail. Cecil saw to it that the Queen became cognisant of Essex' amours, and it was undoubtedly this knowledge that at the end steeled her heart against him. It is unlikely that Shakespeare would venture upon such thin ice without the backing of Southampton, or others of Essex' friends, who evidently incited this inferential council to their leader.

Knowledge of the performance of *Troilus and Cressida* and of Shakespeare's distortion of the story, coming to Chapman, he immediately published a single book of the Iliads (the 18th), which he entitled, *Achilles' Shield*, and also dedicated to the Earl of Essex. In his dedication of *Seaven Bookes of Homer's Iliades*, he had likened Essex to Achilles, praising his "Achillean virtues." It was the personal parallel that Chapman had already drawn that gave the point to Shakespeare's play. Whatever offence Essex may have taken at the application of the play to himself would re-act more upon Chapman than upon Shakespeare, who appeared innocently to be playing the part of Hoder to Chapman's Lok. Chapman's characteristic lack of tact is shown in his stupid endeavour to put himself in the right by the publication of *Achilles' Shield*, with a second dedication to Essex. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare had represented Achilles as sulking in his tent from wounded vanity, and, at the same time, as being involved in an intrigue with a daughter of the enemy: which exactly matched the circumstances in Essex' case in 1598. For weeks at a time he had withdrawn from the Court, keeping his bed for days, pretending sickness; yet during this time his relations with a daughter of the Earl of Nottingham — Cecil's firmest political adherent — were notorious. Chapman, in *Achilles' Shield*, explains Achilles' inaction by showing him as awaiting fresh arms from Vulcan. Both its defensive title and its matter plainly reveal its intention as a rebuttal of Shakespeare's version of the story.

Troilus and Cressida was produced before Essex and his friends at the Blackfriars, or at the house of some of Essex' adherents, some time in December, 1598. Within a few weeks of this performance, Shakespeare produced for *the first time, and at the same place, The Second Part of Henry IV*. In the epilogue to this play he apologises to his auditors for *Troilus and Cressida* in the following words: "Be it known to you *as it is very well*, I was lately *here* in the end of *a displeasing play* to pray your patience for it and to promise you a better. I meant indeed, to pay you with

this." The evidence I possess for the date of production I assign to *Troilus and Cressida* and to the *Second Part of Henry IV*, is both interesting and conclusive, but is not pertinent to this sketch. The subsequent history and metamorphosis of *Troilus and Cressida*, into its present form, will be outlined in the course of this narrative.

Slightly earlier in the year 1598, Shakespeare composed the poem entitled *The Lover's Complaint*. Like *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, the *Sonnets*, and most of the plays of the Sonnet period, this poem also inferentially portrays phases in the life of the Earl of Southampton. The young Earl is the recreant lover, Elizabeth Vernon the distressed maiden, Shakespeare the sympathetic shepherd. The description of Southampton's personality is most palpable and the facts of the story, fancifully told and slightly embellished, match the actual circumstances in the relations subsisting between Southampton and Elizabeth Vernon in this year.

In extant letters of the time we learn that in January, 1598, Southampton's relations with Elizabeth Vernon gave rise to Court gossip. Ambrose Willoughby, a court attendant, and evidently an adherent of the Cecil faction, becoming cognisant of clandestine meetings between these lovers and interfering in his capacity of squire of the body, became embroiled in a personal encounter with Southampton, in which that nobleman lost some of his "browny locks." An investigation of the affray becoming necessary, the Lord Chamberlain and the Earl of Essex examined into it, and in the interest of the good name of the lady implicated (Essex' cousin, Elizabeth Vernon), endeavoured to silence the scandal by reporting the matter as merely the result of a dispute over a game of cards. Southampton, however, was commanded to absent himself from the Court, and is reported as being "full of discontentments at the Queen's strangest usage of him." Within a few days he obtained leave to travel, and left England, in company with Sir Robert Cecil for the French Court. Elizabeth Vernon is reported as "weeping out her fairest eyes" at his departure. It was also rumored at the time that a secret marriage had taken

place before he left England. On March 17th, Cecil presented Southampton to Henry IV, of France, at the camp at Angiers, with the assurance that the Earl had "come with determination to do him service." Within a few weeks of Southampton's arrival at the French camp, a truce was declared and Southampton departed for Paris, where gossip reports him as living somewhat freely for several months. One letter tells of his losing eighteen hundred crowns at tennis, and other letters hint at affairs of a tenderer nature. In his own letters to Cecil and Essex, he intimates his intention of leaving Paris and of travelling into Italy, yet he lingered on for months in Paris. At this time he renewed his acquaintance with his old friends, Sir Charles and Sir Henry Danvers, who were still in exile, but who succeeded in August, 1598, in compromising their difference with the Longs by a large payment of money, and also in having their sentence of banishment revoked. Upon the departure of the Danvers for England, Southampton entrusted Sir Henry with a letter to Cecil in which he begged Cecil to expedite the bearer's return to Paris, in order that he might accompany him on his Italian travels. This letter was merely a ruse to blind Cecil to the fact, that he himself had left Paris for London. Disguising himself he accompanied the Danvers to England, and upon his arrival in London, wrote Essex acquainting him of his return and asking for a private meeting. He remained in London three or four days, and during his stay was secretly married to Elizabeth Vernon; whose condition had shortly before caused her dismissal from the Court. He returned to France before knowledge of these facts had become public. The Queen expressed the deepest anger against Southampton, Essex, and everyone engaged in the affair. She even threatened to commit the new Countess to the Fleet. Orders were immediately issued commanding Southampton to return at once upon his allegiance. By the advice of his friends the young Earl wisely deferred his return until the heat of her virgin Majesty's displeasure had time to cool. He wrote to Cecil assuring him of his sincere desire to return

and cast himself upon her Majesty's mercy, but protesting also his utter inability to do so from lack of funds. Upon his return, early in November, he was committed to the Fleet, but was liberated within a few days. He was never afterwards, however, admitted to the Queen's presence. Late in October the new Countess gave birth to a daughter.

The Lover's Complaint was written while Southampton was still in France and before his secret return to England in August. It exhibits Shakespeare's sympathy with Elizabeth Vernon, and his opinion of Southampton's behaviour, and shows also that he was not wholly in Southampton's confidence at this time.

All's Well that Ends Well, owes its present title to the outcome of these lovers' troubles, and in its revised portions depicts the spirit and incidents of their lives in this year. I believe I can demonstrate December, 1598, as the date of its final revision and change from *Love's Labour's Won* to its later title.

Southampton's early liberation from the Fleet in November, 1598, was not due to Elizabeth's condonement or forgiveness of his offence. His freedom was granted in order to placate Essex and hasten his acceptance of the command of the Irish Expedition, then in course of preparation. Several months had been wasted in negotiations between the Court and Essex regarding the scope of his powers as general of the forces, and the personnel, strength and equipment of the army. Both Essex, and his more judicious followers, realised the dangerous responsibility that Cecil was now endeavouring to foist upon him, and suspected occult and sinister motives in the little Secretary's eagerness to remove him from the Court, and to embark him in such a doubtful enterprise. They remembered how disastrous Ireland had hitherto proved to military reputations. Cecil's attempt to deprive him of the credit for the success of the Cadiz Expedition in 1596, was yet fresh in Essex' mind; while the strained relations — resulting from his failure in the Island Voyage in 1597 — that still subsisted between his faction and the Court, he also knew to be due largely to Cecil's machinations.

In October, 1596, after the return of the fleet from Cadiz, Francis Bacon, with almost prophetic vision had warned Essex of the plans likely to be pursued by Cecil to encompass his downfall. The events of the past year had demonstrated the astuteness of this advice. Cecil's adherents were, as Bacon predicted, advanced and ennobled, while Essex and his friends were rebuffed and treated coldly; and, in fact, every phase of his forecast of Cecil's policies regarding Essex, was manifested in action in this short interval. Essex House under these circumstances became a political Cave of Adullam.

> All the unsettled humors of the land,
> Rash, inconsiderate, fiery voluntaries,
> With ladies' faces and fierce dragons' spleens

urged him against his own better judgment and the advice of his wiser adherents, to the acceptance of the Irish Command. Where martial glory was concerned, Essex needed little urging; but, with the experience of the Cadiz Expedition and of his late failure in the Island Voyage in mind, he pertinaciously contested every point regarding the powers of his commission. Late in November, or early in December, 1598, it was finally decided that he would assume the command; yet four more months elapsed before the army embarked.

Between the end of November, 1598, and April, 1599, when Southampton sailed with Essex to Ireland, his relations with Shakespeare became more intimate than they had been at any time since the Winter of 1594–95, when the first publication of *Willobie his Avisa* had interrupted their friendship, or at least the outward appearance of it. The seventh and last *book* of Sonnets, which was composed during these months, expresses our poet's gratification at his reunion with his patron. It also reflects the political conditions of this period, and answers certain slurs cast against him by Chapman, in a poem addressed to his friend Thomas Harriots, and appended to *Achilles' Shield*, which was published late in 1598.

THE SEVENTH BOOK OF SONNETS

Book VII
Sonnet I

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
(XXIX—Thorpe) Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

Book VII
Sonnet II

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by fortune's dearest spite,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
(XXXVII—Thorpe) Entitled in thy parts do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give
That I in thy abundance am sufficed,
And by a part of all thy glory live.
Look, what is best, that best I wish in thee:
This wish I have; then ten times happy me!

Book VII
Sonnet III

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
(XXXVI—Thorpe) Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

Book VII
Sonnet IV

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.
Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
(CXI—Thorpe) To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then and wish I were renew'd;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;
No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

Book VII
Sonnet V

Your love and pity doth the impression fill
Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow?
You are my all the world, and I must strive
To know my shames and praises from your tongue;
(CXII—Thorpe) None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That my steel'd sense or changes right or wrong.
In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
Mark how with my neglect I do dispense:
You are so strongly in my purpose bred
That all the world besides methinks are dead.

Book VII
Sonnet VI

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, you've pass'd a hell of time;
(CXX—Thorpe) And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits,
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!
But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

Book VII
Sonnet VII

'Tis better to be vile than vile esteemed,
When not to be receives reproach of being;
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed
Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing:
For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood?
(CXXI—Thorpe) Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own:
I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel;
By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown;
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad and in their badness reign.

Book VII
Sonnet VIII

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
(CXXIX—Thorpe) Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.
All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

Book VII
Sonnet IX

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw myself to win!
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
(CXIX—Thorpe) How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
So I return rebuked to my content,
And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

Book VII
Sonnet X

Like as, to make our appetites more keen,
With eager compounds we our palate urge;
As, to prevent our maladies unseen,
We sicken to shun sickness when we purge;
Even so, being full of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
(CXVIII—Thorpe) And sick of welfare found a kind of meetness
To be diseased, ere that there was true needing.
Thus policy in love, to anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
And brought to medicine a healthful state,
Which, rank of goodness, would by ill be cured:
But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

Book VII
Sonnet XI

Accuse me thus: that I have scanted all
Wherein I should your great deserts repay.
Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
Whereto all bonds do tie me day by day;
That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right;
(CXVII—Thorpe) That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
And on just proof surmise accumulate;
Bring me within the level of your frown,
But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate;
Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
The constancy and virtue of your love.

Book VII
Sonnet XII

Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
(CX—Thorpe) These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.
Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

Book VII
Sonnet XIII

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again;
(CIX—Thorpe) Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

Book VII
Sonnet XIV

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
Full character'd with lasting memory,
Which shall above; that idle rank remain,
Beyond all date, even to eternity:
Or, at the least, so long as brain and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist;
(CXXII—Thorpe) Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
That poor retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
To keep an adjunct to remember thee
Were to import forgetfulness in me.

Book VII
Sonnet XV

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
(CXXIII—Thorpe) And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.
This I do vow, and this shall ever be,
I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

Book VII
Sonnet XVI

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my judgement knew no reason why
My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer.
But reckoning Time, whose million'd accidents
Creep in 'twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
(CXV—Thorpe) Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Divert strong minds to the course of altering things;
Alas, why, fearing of Time's tyranny,
Might I not then say 'Now I love you best,'
When I was certain o'er incertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that which still doth grow?

Book VII
Sonnet XVII

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
(CXXIV—Thorpe) Under the blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls:
It fears not policy, that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours.
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.
To this I witness call the fools of time,
Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

Book VII
Sonnet XVIII

Were't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent,
(CXXV—Thorpe) For compound sweet forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art
But mutual render, only me for thee.
Hence, thou suborn'd informer! a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

Book VII
Sonnet XIX

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
(CXVI—Thorpe) It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Book VII
Sonnet XX

Let those who are in favour with their stars
Of public honour and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlook'd for joy in that I honour most.
Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
(XXV—Thorpe) And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd,
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd:
Then happy I, that love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

The "bewailed guilt" acknowledged in the third Sonnet of this *book*, refers to Shakespeare's relations with the Dark Lady. The "vulgar scandal" mentioned in the fifth Sonnet, alludes to the publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, and other means taken by his opponents to give publicity to the affair; in which they succeeded so well that it is evident a disruption of his friendship with the Dark Lady took place at this time. Florio and Roydon were both Oxford graduates, and no doubt, habitués of the George Inn, and on tavern terms with its sprightly hostess. In some manner they succeeded in obtaining from her, two Sonnets that Shakespeare had written to her, which they published a few months later, along with a miscellany of poems written by different persons, under the title of *The Passionate Pilgrim*. They included also several songs taken from *Love's Labour's Lost*, in order to give a colorable excuse for using Shakespeare's name as author upon the title page. The publication of this book was intended to synchronise with a new issue of *Willobie his Avisa*, and also to serve as a key to its hidden meaning; as *Penelope's Complaint* was meant to be to the issue of 1596. We have record that the publication of *Willobie his Avisa* in 1599, was prevented by the public censor. From the fact that no copies of the edition of 1596 are known to be extant, it appears evident that it also was condemned. The issue of 1605, is mentioned as the "Fourth" issue upon the title page, and contains "An Apologie," reprinted from the edition of 1596, which did not appear in the issue of 1594.

The remorse and bitterness expressed in the seventh *book* of Sonnets, is re-echoed in *Troilus and Cressida*. In the delineation of the sensuous and faithless Cressida, Shakespeare reflects his impressions of the Dark Lady at this period. It is evident that much of his disgust and bitterness, was due to his belief that she had wilfully betrayed him to his antagonists, in giving them the Sonnets he had written her.

The first five lines of the Sonnet, numbered as the 17th in this sequence (Thorpe 124):

If my dear love were but the child of state
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from accident;

answers a slur of Chapman's against Shakespeare, in the poem to Harriots hitherto mentioned, where he refers to Shakespeare's Sonnets as "tympanies of State."

The seventh and eighth lines of this Sonnet,

. . . The blow of thralled discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls,

alludes to the impatience and discontent of the younger nobility and gentry attached to Essex, who chafed at the restraints put upon their leader by the Queen, and tacitly, by Cecil, and at their own consequent inaction.

The ninth and tenth lines,

. . . Policy, that heretic,
That works on leases of short-number'd hours,

is a daring description of Sir Robert Cecil's growing power over the aging Queen, and a hint at Essex' hoped for return to power on the coming of James. Neither Shakespeare, Essex nor Bacon, much as they disliked and distrusted Cecil, foresaw at this time, the far-reaching nature of his plans to provide against this contingency. A year later, Bacon realised both Cecil's real objective and the relentless persistence with which he advanced towards it, and from fear, as much as the hope of benefits to come, turned traitor to Essex, and assumed the political livery of his little cousin.

The concluding lines of this Sonnet,

To this I witness call the fools of time,
That die for goodness, who have lived for crime,

refer to the execution of three men — Stanley, Rolls and Squires — who were condemned and executed in December, 1598, for an attempt upon the life of the Earl of Essex, and a conspiracy against the Queen. Upon their execution they expressed great contrition and religious fervor, thereby, in Shakespeare's phrase, "die (ing) for goodness."

The last Sonnet in this sequence alludes to Essex' adverse relations with Elizabeth, to his past victories, and his failure in the Island Voyage, which had resulted in his present disfavor. This was the last *book* of Sonnets written by Shakespeare to the Earl of Southampton. It was finished in December, 1598.

In January, 1599, the Queen and Essex were again apparently on an amicable footing, which continued until Essex left England in April. It is probable, however, that her appearance of friendliness during these months was largely assumed, and that her patience had been exhausted by the favorite's stiff-necked deportment during the past two years. One of the stipulations regarding his patent of power for which Essex had held out persistently, and which finally was grudgingly allowed, was that he should have liberty to return to England at any time that he considered it advisable to do so; yet, he had scarcely landed in Ireland before this right was revoked. Cecil at last had led his victim into the trap he had laid for him, and meant if possible to keep him there. It appears likely that the Queen was wittingly a party to this device. The acrid tone of her letters to Essex from the time he landed in Ireland, suggests that her recent appearance of favor had been dictated by policy.

In the early months of 1599, while Southampton and Essex were still in England, Shakespeare composed *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. A well-authenticated tradition, ascribes the composition of this play to the command of Queen Elizabeth, who, it is said, had been so entertained by the character of Falstaff in *Henry IV.*, that she desired to see the same character depicted in love. I can adduce convincing evidence that *Henry IV. Part II.* was composed in December, 1598. It is evident then, that it would be included in the number of the plays acted before the Queen during the Christmas, New Year's, or Twelfth Night festivities. If there is any truth in the tradition of the Queen's command regarding *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, it is likely that her desire would be expressed while her interest in *Henry IV.* was fresh or newly aroused. The development of

this chronological outline will show the extreme unlikelihood of the composition of *The Merry Wives*, at a period subsequent to March, 1599, and internal evidence of style as well as all metrical tests negative an earlier date.

I am convinced that in the characters of "Master Fenton," and "Sweet Anne Page," Shakespeare reflects the persons of Lord Compton and Elizabeth Spencer, who, in spite of the most strenuous opposition on the part of the father of the latter, eloped and were married, towards the end of March, 1599. Lord Compton had for several years been an intimate friend of Southampton, as Fenton is represented as having been of the wild Prince. The proposed marriage and the angry opposition of the wealthy Sir John Spencer, (who used most extraordinary means in his endeavors to prevent it), were common gossip in Court circles during February and March, 1599. This new evidence, in conjunction with known facts, indicates that this play was presented for the first time within a few days of Essex' and Southampton's departure for Ireland, in April, 1599.

This play was revised shortly after the accession of James I. I suggest that its revision was made for presentation at festivities incident to an installation of the Garter. The following passage from Act V. Scene V., of the Folio version, is absent from the Quarto which was issued in 1602.

> Quick. About, about;
> Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out:
> Strew good luck, ouphes, on every sacred room;
> That it may stand till the perpetual doom,
> In state as wholesome as in state 'tis fit,
> Worthy the owner, and the owner it.
> The several chairs of order look you scour
> With juice of balm and every precious flower:
> Each fair instalment, coat, and several crest,
> With loyal blazon, evermore be blest!
> And nightly, meadow-fairies, look you sing,
> Like to the Garter's compass, in a ring:
> Th' expressure that it bears, green let it be,
> More fertile-fresh than all the field to see;
> And Honi soit qui mal y pense write

In emerald tufts, flowers purple, blue, and white;
Like sapphire, pearl, and rich embroidery,
Buckled below fair knighthood's bending knee:
Fairies use flowers for their charactery.

It is extremely probable, in view of Shakespeare's connection with the Earl of Southampton, that the revision was made for performance upon the occasion of that nobleman's admission to the Order of the Garter, in the Summer of 1603, "When the Court lay at Windsor" (Act II. Scene II.) It was customary for the Court to be held at Greenwich in the Summertime.

The martial spirit aroused in London in the early months of 1599, by the military preparations for the Irish wars, as well as Shakespeare's sympathy with Essex, Southampton and their following, and his ardent hope for their success, are reflected in *Henry V.*, which was composed in the Spring or Summer of this year. This play may have been produced in some form before the leaders sailed. It is evident, however, that the prologue and other portions of the play were written after the campaign had opened and at a time when their speedy victory and triumphal return were looked for.

In *Henry IV. Parts I. and II.*, the characters of Prince Hal and Falstaff, and their friendship, adumbrate Southampton and Florio and their intimacy, which it is very evident that Shakespeare deprecated. In the Prince's soliloquy in *Henry IV. Part I.*, Act I. Scene II., as follows:

Prince. I know you all, and will a while uphold
The unyoked humour of your idleness:
Yet herein will I imitate the sun,
Who doth permit the base contagious clouds
To smother up his beauty from the world,
That, when he please again to be himself,
Being wanted, he may be more wonder'd at,
By breaking through the foul and ugly mists
Of vapours that did seem to strangle him.
If all the year were playing holidays,
To sport would be as tedious as to work;

> But when they seldom come, they wish'd for come,
> And nothing pleaseth but rare accidents.
> So, when this loose behaviour I throw off,
> And pay the debt I never promised,
> By how much better than my word I am,
> By so much shall I falsify men's hopes;
> And, like bright metal on a sullen ground,
> My reformation, glittering o'er my fault,
> Shall show more goodly and attract more eyes
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off.
> I'll so offend, to make offence a skill;
> Redeeming time, when men think least I will.

Shakespeare foreshadows for Southampton the things he himself desiderates; the awakening of a sense of responsibility and the casting off of his loose companions.

Past critics who have not suspected, or else refused to consider, the possibility of a subjective interest in Shakespeare's plays, have frequently been puzzled by the apparent dramatic inconsistency of the cold and calculating phase of the Prince's character revealed in the soliloquy quoted above, and in only one other stage of his delineation, which also strikes the reader unpleasantly. Notwithstanding his undoubted personal dislike of Florio, the prototype for this character, Shakespeare has depicted in Falstaff such an amusing and interesting rascal, that few readers of the play fail to sympathise with him in his fall, when the King, his former boon companion, casts him off. In these, as in all other noted instances in the plays where Shakespeare seems to lapse in dramatic verisimilitude, an underlying subjective interest may be looked for.

It is apparent that when Shakespeare revised the First Part of *Henry IV.* into its present form, in the early months of 1598, he had then in mind, the composition of the second part of the play which depicts Falstaff's downfall. In the forecast of the Prince's reformation in the passage quoted from Part I., and in his final repudiation of Falstaff in Part II., Shakespeare tacitly admonishes Southampton, and at the same time anticipates the heightened and glorified characterisation with which he depicts Henry V., whom he

presents as a wise, daring and capable leader of men; as an exalted ideal for Southampton to emulate.

The next play written, following *Henry V.*, in order of composition, was *Much Ado About Nothing*. In the light of Shakespeare's connection with the Earls of Southampton and Essex, and their faction, there can be little doubt that this play was written for presentation at the festivities upon the occasion of the marriage of the Earl of Rutland to Elizabeth Sidney, stepdaughter of the Earl of Essex; which took place some time between September 28, and October 16, 1599. At the end of January, 1599, while Essex was engaged in organising his forces, an order from the Court was issued, countermanding permission to accompany the Expedition previously granted to certain of his followers, and including the Earl of Rutland.

Shortly following this, a marriage was planned between this nobleman and the Earl of Essex' stepdaughter, and all arrangements apparently made for the nuptials to take place before Essex' departure for Ireland. In the meantime, Rutland again succeeded in obtaining permission to accompany the army. In a letter dated March 16th, John Chamberlain, informing his friend Dudley Carleton, of the progress of Essex' preparations, writes: "The Earls of Southampton and Rutland (who hath latlie married the Countess of Essex' daughter) do accompany him." The fact that such a well-informed gossip as Chamberlain should report this deferred marriage as an accomplished fact, suggests that its postponement must have taken place at the last moment, and after the date set for it had been publicly announced. The marriage was undoubtedly deferred owing to the young Earl's desire to accompany his friends to the wars.

Claudio. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?
Don Pedro. No child but Hero; she's his only heir.
Dost thou affect her Claudio?
Claudio. O my lord,
When you went onward on this ended action,
I looked upon her with a soldier's eye,
That liked, but had a rougher task in hand

Than to drive liking to the name of love:
But now I am return'd and that war thoughts
Have left their places vacant, in their room.
Come thronging soft and delicate desires,
All prompting me how fair young Hero is,
Saying, I liked her ere I went to wars.

I suggest in this connection, that *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was originally composed for the marriage of Sir Thomas Heneage to the Countess of Southampton, in May, 1594, was revised in February, 1599 for presentation at the marriage festivities being arranged for this young couple at that time. In this light Shakespeare's reference to:

The thrice three muses mourning for the death
Of learning late deceased in beggary

as applicable to Edmund Spenser, who died on January 16, 1599, takes on new significance. There is absolutely no foundation for the conjecture that these lines referred to the death of Robert Greene in the autumn of 1592.

Upon September 1st, Rowland Whyte, writing to Sir Robert Sidney, says, "My Lord of Rutland is now and then at Court. I hear he intends your niece to be Countess of Rutland as young as she is." Writing again to Sidney six weeks later, and three weeks after Essex' return from Ireland, he announces that "My Lady of Essex' daughter was christened by the Earl of Southampton, The Lady Cumberland and Lady Rutland;" which gives us evidence that Rutland had married between these dates.

The querulous and vacillating attitude of the Queen towards Essex and his friends at this period, is evidenced by her recall of Rutland from Ireland early in June. It was reported that Southampton intended returning to England at the same time; as Essex had been compelled by explicit orders from the Queen to dismiss him from his command as General of the Horse. Essex neglected, however, to appoint a successor, and Southampton remained with him during the summer, accompanying him, with others of his friends, to England in September. In leaving his command in Ireland and returning unannounced, and in defiance of the Queen's

express injunctions to the contrary, Essex played into Cecil's hands. From this time onward, until his execution in February, 1601, he remained under the Queen's displeasure, being restrained from appearing at Court. For several months, with varying degrees of severity, he was confined at the Lord Keeper's, or his own house; at times being threatened with the Tower. His adherents in the meantime held aloof from the Court, or were expressly restrained by the Queen's orders; while factional animosity between them and Cecil's followers developed apace, quarrels occurring daily between the partisans in taverns and ordinaries.

Upon October 11th, Rowland Whyte in a letter to Robert Sidney, says, "My Lord Southampton and Lord Rutland come not to the Court, the one doth, but very seldom. They pass away the time in London merely in going to playes every day." It is not difficult to imagine the plays and playhouse that would be most popular with these noblemen. With the adverse fortunes of his friends in mind, Shakespeare composed *As You Like It*, towards the end of 1599. It is probable that it was first performed at Christmas time. The following song and its reference to holly suggest this season.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
  As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen,
Because thou art not seen,
  Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing, heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
  Then, heigh-ho, the holly!
  This life is most jolly.

This song echoes the bitter-sweet spirit of the whole play.

One year later, with the interests of Essex and his friends still in mind, our poet composed his last real Comedy. I give convincing evidence that *Twelfth Night* was composed in January, 1601. Within four weeks of the date of its intended performance Essex had gone to the block, and

Southampton to the Tower, while their faction was disrupted and scattered. From this time onwards life takes on sober colorings for Shakespeare.

Returning to a consideration of the dramatic hostilities between our poet and his antagonists at this period; early in 1599, Chapman and his allies in answer to Shakespeare's recent attack upon them in *Troilus and Cressida*, and the revision of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, revised an old play which they put on the boards under the title of *Histrio-Mastix, or the Player Whipt.* I can advance new evidence showing that both Chapman and Marston were concerned in the revision and public production of this play at this time. Shakespeare is caricatured in it as Posthaste, while the Lord Chamberlain's Company, who now for about two years had been performing, when in Lordon, almost exclusively at The Blackfriars, and for select audiences, are presented as Sir Oliver Owlet's players, a private company under the patronage of Lord Malvortius and his friends. Malvortius represents Southampton; Landulpho, the Italian lord, who criticises the play acted by these players in the hall of Lord Malvortius, as "base trash," in comparison with Italian drama, represents Florio, who as early as 1591, in the preface to his *Second Fruits*, had made similar reflections on English drama. *Histrio-Mastix* was evidently written by Chapman and others, under some other name, and in an earlier form, in about 1593–94, at the same period that Chapman produced the *Hymns to the Shadow of Night.* Even at that date it had an anti-Shakespearean intention.

The revision of 1599, was made by Chapman and Marston, who commenced to collaborate in dramatic work in the preceding year. From Shakespeare's recently acted *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in its revised form, including the play within the play acted by Bottom and his "rude mechanicals," Chapman and Marston took their cue for the revision of *Histrio-Mastix*, and, as Shakespeare had parodied and caricatured Roydon and his friends in *Pyramus and Thisbe*, they now indicated and assailed him by introducing *Troylus and Cressida*, as the play to be acted by Posthaste and his

players. The prologue to this proposed play alludes scurrilously to Shakespeare's relations with Mistress Davenant; while the few lines of the play itself that are spoken refer indicatively to an incident in Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*. The play is represented as being so poor that it is stopped by Lord Malvortius before it is finished. This I suggest was a reflection of the actual fact regarding the first and only production of *Troilus and Cressida*, in its earliest form a few months before, when its performance was discontinued at the order, or request, of the Earl of Essex.

At about the same time that Marston joined the anti-Shakespearean clique and commenced to collaborate with George Chapman, Ben Jonson became temporarily affiliated with The Lord Chamberlain's Company; having quarrelled with Henslowe with whom he had been previously connected. During his short connection with Shakespeare's Company in 1598–99, Jonson maintained a neutral attitude in the quarrel between Shakespeare and the opposing clique. In *Every Man out of His Humour*, which was first acted by the Lord Chamberlain's Company towards the end of 1599, Jonson appears to have taken up the cudgels in a perfunctory manner for Shakespeare's side by parodying *Histrio-Mastix*. After the fall of the Essex faction, and the consequent loss of Court favor and public prestige to the Lord Chamberlain's Company, Jonson joined the opposition to Shakespeare and in a revised production of *Every Man out of His Humour*, and other plays composed in these later years, including *The Poetaster*, *Cynthia's Revels* and *Volpone*, attacked him as bitterly and scurrilously as his older opponents. At a still later time, when Jonson had quarrelled with his old collaborator Chapman, he denied his former hostility to Shakespeare and eulogised him in despite of Chapman.

Marston's alliance with Chapman and his attacks upon Shakespeare in 1598–99, had the effect of rallying to our poet's support both Chettle and Dekker, who had previously been at ódds with Marston. The dramatic and literary recriminations which now ensued for some years between

these opposing factions, have hitherto been little understood, and are usually referred to vaguely as the "war of the theatres."

Shakespeare, personally, made no dramatic answer to *Histrio-Mastix*, but instead, enlisted the co-operation of his new allies, Dekker and Chettle, to whom he gave *Troilus and Cressida*, which they revised; and, changing its name to *Agamemnon*, sold to Henslowe, who produced it on the public boards in about the middle of 1599. In their revision of this play, Dekker and Chettle more fully developed the satire against Chapman and his clique, personifying Shakespeare as the wise Ulysses; Marston as the scurrilous Thersites, and Florio as Pandarus. As the bitterness between the factions increased, this play underwent other revisions, to fit it to the exigencies of new occasions. It continued to be used offensively and defensively in slightly altered forms for several years, both by Henslowe's and the Lord Chamberlain's Company, and was finally revised for publication by Shakespeare in 1609, as an answer to an attack made upon him by Chapman, in *The Tears of Peace.* The issue of the same Quarto in this year under two divergent title pages, is explained by the fact that the copyright of the play as it had been acted by "The King's Majesty's Servants at the Globe," belonged to Henslowe, or parties to whom he may have assigned it. The publishers, overlooking this fact, issued it with a title page reading, "As it was acted by the King's Majestie's Servants at the Globe," but their rights being challenged, they cancelled the first title page, and substituted one eliminating these words, at the same time adding a preface asserting the play to be "a new play never staled with the stage, never clapper clawed with the palms of the vulgar." The publishers inform us also in this preface, that the owners of the copyright had endeavored to prevent publication, which had been made against their wishes. This could not have been done had Shakespeare not recovered ownership by revision at this time. The trouble experienced by the publishers of the Folio in 1623, in including *Troilus and Cressida*, no doubt

arose from the dual ownership of copyright. The title given the play in the Folio, as *The Tragedy of Troilus and Cressida*, as well as numerous significant differences between that version and the Quarto, imply that the Folio text is a compilation made from the Quarto and an older version of the play.

Marston continued to be leagued with Chapman against Shakespeare until he retired from the stage in about 1607. I doubt if Jonson's change of heart took place until after Shakespeare's death. I find evidences of his hostility to our poet as late as the year 1612. No credence can be given to the report that he and Drayton visited Shakespeare in 1616, and indulged with him in a drinking bout which caused our poet's death. Chapman continued to revile Shakespeare while he lived, and his memory for years after he had passed away.

The Sonnet period, which covers almost the entire interval between 1591,—in the Autumn of which year Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton formed their first acquaintance, —and the beginning of 1601,—when this nobleman was committed to the Tower on account of his complicity in the Earl of Essex' alleged treason,—was in many respects the most interesting decade in the long reign of Elizabeth. The favorite, Leicester, who for so long had been a thorn in Burghley's side, passed away in 1588, and the astute Walsingham, who had hitherto shared the responsibilities of state with him, died in 1590, leaving the Secretaryship of State vacant. The question of the succession to the crown was yet unsettled, while the Queen's increasing age and irritability prevented, or rendered difficult, its discussion. Burghley and his son, Sir Robert Cecil, with the possibility of the Queen's death in mind, now began to lay their plans for the future continuance of their power. The Earl of Essex (who had been introduced to the notice of the Queen by his stepfather, Leicester, a few years before his death), at this period stood high in her favor, and, in the estimation of the Cecils, threatened to prove a strong political competitor. The intrigue, trickery, and dissimulation resorted

to in the ensuing years by Burghley, and more especially by his son, to discredit and ruin Essex, when traced in the state papers and other contemporary records, read like improbable fiction.

Though ambitious of power and none too scrupulous in his political methods, Burghley presents on the whole a sturdy figure. Restrained by an apparently sincere religious faith, there were depths of political perfidy to which he would not descend. His son, however, was untrammelled either by faith or conscience. The death of Burghley in 1598, removing Cecil's sole confidant, removed also his only moral restraint. It was not alone Essex' influence with the Queen that Cecil feared, but still more the bond of friendship he had established with her logical successor the Scottish King. To discredit his incautious and high-spirited rival with the resentful and capricious Elizabeth was a comparatively simple matter, but to undermine his relations with James, without either tacitly or openly espousing the cause of his succession, and thereby risking his hold upon the confidence of Elizabeth, was not so easy: yet to accomplish both of these things, and in addition to encompass the death of Essex and the ruin of his faction, under color of law, and at the same time to win the favor and confidence of James, were the apparently impossible ends that now became Cecil's objective. Within two years and a half of the death of Burghley, Essex had gone to the block and Southampton to the Tower. It has been assumed by certain historians, that Southampton was preserved by Cecil's humanity. He owed his life solely to the fact, that his preservation by Cecil's influence might serve as an argument in the latter's favor in the secret negotiations he now opened with James regarding the succession, and which ended two years later in the accession of James and the complete triumph of Cecil's plans.

The depths of this unscrupulous politician's duplicity have never been historically sounded. We have exhaustive lives of his victims, Raleigh and Essex, and of others of his contemporaries who exercised a less potent influence upon the

practical politics of his day; but Cecil's life has never been written, though the materials for it that are extant are probably more extensive than are the records concerning any man of his time.

Though historians for some reason appear to have shirked an investigation, or at least a revelation of this man's life, and are usually apologetic, or noncommittal, regarding him, it is not difficult to trace in the published records and letters, as well as in the literature of the time, the tacit estimate of his character held by those who had most reason to analyse it, amongst whom were at least two men who were no mean psychologists; one being his cousin, Francis Bacon, and the other, William Shakespeare. In both cases the opinions expressed are necessarily veiled, but there can be no doubt of their intended application. Bacon had good reason to know Cecil thoroughly. He himself had been his tool or his dupe for years, and to an almost hypnotic fear of his bold and crafty relative is due some of the meanest episodes of his political career. Shakespeare too, felt and knew the evil effects of his power. In view of the disastrous influence exercised upon the fortunes of Southampton and Essex, by Cecil, it is obviously impossible that the attention of such a vitally interested and keen observer as Shakespeare, remained unattracted by so fateful a political figure, or his psychological interest unaroused by such a remarkable character study as the little Secretary presented.

From the time that Shakespeare first met the Earl of Southampton, in the Autumn of 1591, everything interested him that vitally affected his patron. Southampton's associates, friends, and followers became Shakespeare's models for his characters, according to the estimate he formed of their good or evil influence upon the character or fortunes of his friend. His political leanings were palpably towards the Essex faction. However much he may at times have deprecated the unwisdom of the conduct of Essex and Southampton, he undoubtedly sympathised with their aspirations and was deeply antipathetic towards the Cecil faction.

While his interested and friendly reflections of Southampton and his connections, in the plays, were veiled sufficiently to hide the subjective features from the curiosity of the public, we may be assured that they were readily recognised by the persons interested. It is apparent also that Chapman, Roydon and Florio, recognised the caricature and satire directed at themselves. I conceive it to have been practically impossible that Shakespeare should have followed the fortunes of Southampton and Essex with such deep interest for so long a period without becoming imbued by the same mingled sense of interest and repugnance that animated his friends towards Cecil, and think it equally improbable that he should not in some manner have attempted his characterisation during these years.

Though it was specifically forbidden by acts of parliament, passed in the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, to treat dramatically of matters of church or state, the laws were more honored in their breach than their observance. Much ingenuity was exercised by the dramatists of the time in their evasion; a favorite method being to build new plays, capable of subjective interpretation, upon popular novels or threadbare dramas, the publication or presentation of which had passed for years unchallenged by the public censors. No stage poet of the time equalled the adroitness of Shakespeare in this respect, and it is largely to this reason rather than to his presumed lack of constructive originality that we owe the fact that practically all of his plays are based upon extant originals. We may be assured then that in any derogatory reflection he might make of one so powerful, revengeful and unscrupulous as Cecil, he would be careful to protect himself in a similar manner. I am strongly of the opinion that *Richard III*, in its earliest form, was the composition of some other writer, and that in the later revisions of this play, in about 1594 and 1597, Shakespeare, in the character and personality of Richard, had the deformed and aspiring little Secretary in mind.

By the Winter of 1600–01, Essex' party was practically disrupted. Since the Summer of 1599, its leader had been

a prisoner of state, played with by Cecil as a cat plays with a mouse. Accident and chance alike were turned to his discredit with the Queen. His hopes of a reconciliation were alternately raised and blasted. As the months passed by, the implacable nature of Cecil's intentions regarding him gradually dawned upon City and Court. Time-servers passed in increasing numbers to the side of Cecil, while only the more youthful and hotheaded of Essex' adherents remained faithful. The Queen, perplexed and irritated by the factional bitterness, aged rapidly. Her death, which might occur at any time, would bring James to the throne and Essex back to place and power. The hush that fell towards the end of 1600, upon Court gossip and the guarded tone of correspondents show a tacit cognisance of Cecil's true purpose. It became whispered that Essex' life was in danger. The rumors reached Essex in his confinement, as they were intended to; driven to desperation he headed the foolish and futile outbreak that brought him within his enemy's power for life or death.

While friend and foe, aware towards the end, of the relentless purpose of Cecil and of his growing power over the Queen, apprehended a fateful climacteric to Essex' cause, Shakespeare, socially and politically too unimportant actively to affect or be affected by the contending political currents, watched helplessly, in deepening gloom and with a growing sense of fate, the rapidly succeeding acts of the tragedy. It is probable that no onlooker of the time saw more clearly than he through the tangled web of design and chance that gradually enmeshed his friends, and that few, if any, felt more keenly, the effects of their downfall.

In the troubles of Southampton and Essex we have the key to, but not the solution of, the marked and sudden change in Shakespeare's outlook on life at this time, as it is revealed by a comparison of the nature and tone of the earlier and later plays. It was not the death of Essex, nor the imprisonment of Southampton, though he loved one and admired the other, nor yet the serious injury to his own material prospects, that must have resulted from their disaster, that most

affected him. It was something spiritual and elemental. He has seen "something horrible, grey:" in the irresistible craft and dominating will of Cecil, he has had a vision of evil and its terrible potency, hitherto undreamt of in his joyous philosophy.

He found expression for the more immediate impressions made and feelings aroused in him by his friends' catastrophe, in the composition of *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet.* These utterances, great as they may be, were yet inadequate to his disillusionment and bitterness. Tragedy follows Tragedy for years; each deepening in anger and pessimism. The shadow of Cecil has fallen on his soul, and is not lifted until, at the last, he breaks away from the tainted atmosphere of London and the Court, and renews his faith in human nature by association with youth and innocence in the person of his own daughter. In *A Winter's Tale, Cymbeline,* and *The Tempest* we have reflections of this happier time.

The tragic bitterness displayed in the plays composed in the years intervening between the period of *Hamlet,* and these later plays mentioned, was lightened for a short period by the liberation of Southampton and the promise of better times in the coming of James. Southampton's influence in the new Court, however, was slight and temporary. Those who now held the reins of power had little in common with a man of his mould. Cecil had environed himself with creatures of his own, and of his own type. Cecil, Suffolk and Northampton, (to use a phrase coined by one of themselves), the "diabolical triplicity" that now ruled England, were entirely suited in their ethical and moral latitude to be advisers to the "meanest of kings."

However hidden by his objective skill and political necessity, the personal reflections may be, the intense disgust and bitterness of the plays produced in these later years, also spiritually mirror the times as Shakespeare saw them. In these years, however, while we have neither the Sonnets nor the fortunes of the Essex faction to guide us, we may assume that Shakespeare would continue to work, as in the past, with his eyes and mind open to the world about him.

In this sketch I have briefly outlined merely a few details of a long and interesting history of Shakespeare and his relations with his contemporaries, now made possible by the solution of the Sonnet enigma. I have worked upon this matter when opportunity permitted at intervals for the past fifteen years. A year or two have at times gone by during which I have had no leisure to devote to it, and months and weeks have often passed unfruitfully.

I have now reached the end of the Sonnet period in my more minute investigations and have yet to develop in detail the subjective interest in the plays produced after the end of the year 1601. As some months may elapse before I find time to complete the work I have in mind, I have decided to issue portions of the findings upon which the whole structure of my argument regarding the subjective interest underlying the plays, is based.

The only facts that I endeavour to establish in the present volume are, the identity of Matthew Roydon as the author of *Willobie his Avisa;* the satirical intention of that poem regarding Shakespeare, and the identity of Mistress Davenant of the Crown Inn at Oxford as the Dark Lady of Shakespeare's Sonnets.

To those readers who follow my argument and agree with my conclusions, I can promise that the evidence I possess for the remainder of the history I have here sketched concerning Shakespeare and his contemporaries, will appeal to them with equal credibility. The most convincing evidence of the truth of the subjective theory I advance, lies in its cumulative nature, and it is for this reason that I defer publication of my fuller findings, until I have carried the whole matter to a conclusion.

CHAPTER II

Introductory

THE comparative meagreness of contemporary official and literary records of Shakespeare, has bred a great misconception regarding the actual prestige he attained in his own day. The paucity of these records is due largely to Shakespeare's social condition: to that accident of fate which made a play-actor of our greatest poet, and at a period of our national and social development when a player was practically a social pariah. We have voluminous records of the actions and lives of many men of that age who would now be quite forgotten but for the fact that their lots were cast in official channels, and who, notwithstanding the records, even in their own day were less known than he to the world at large. The lack of official records of the man, William Shakespeare, under these circumstances is not surprising; the hitherto inexplicable thing is, that one of his preponderating genius should apparently have attracted such scanty personal notice and recognition from the contemporary literary world, and that, too, in an age so appreciative of literary production and sensitive to poetic beauty.

While we are in close proximity to a great mountain range, we fail to realise the full distinction between one predominant height and the many lesser peaks which rise around it, but as we move away and peak after peak fades into the general range, the one stands clearly out, more strongly asserting its true proportions in the lengthening perspective. We travel on and on and it is still with us, till in time, the very persistence of its presence breeds in us a sense of awe. So, to some extent, has it been with Shakespeare. While it has

remained for later times to accord him his true place in our literature, and though for about a hundred years after he and his contemporaries had passed away, the world seemed to be unmindful of his great pre-eminence, the fact may be proved, that in spite of the covert opposition and studied neglect of a large class of contemporary writers, Shakespeare attained in his own day as great a prestige as is perhaps ever possible to contemporary judgment.

Seven years after Shakespeare's death, when all petty heat of personal rivalry had cooled, Ben Jonson, who was the most competent dramatic critic of that time, made claims for our poet's fame which fully anticipated all that posterity has since accorded him.

When we read the lines in which Ben Jonson apostrophises Shakespeare as "Soul of the age," we forget that the stultifying influence of the Stuarts had already begun to operate upon our national life, and the expression transports our minds back to "the spacious times of great Elizabeth." When Shakespeare began to write, men not yet old had seen England rise from the position of a fourth to that of a first rate power, and more, to become the hope and guiding star of Europe, and the scourge and dread of Spain. The defeat of the "Great Armada" was still a thing of yesterday, and fresh in the minds of children. Before he had attained the zenith of his power "El Drakon," and "Guateralle," as the Spaniards called Drake and Raleigh, had become names with which Spanish mothers hushed their crying children. The former had in his own metaphor, "Singed the King of Spaines' bearde." He had also, in his little "Golden Hinde" already gone "round by the Horn," circumnavigated the globe, and come home with her hull drawing deep with its freight of Spanish plunder. Grenville, in his single ship the "Revenge," had fought a fleet and died, and Raleigh had planted the English flag on the Western Continent.

The national imagination, keyed by great exploit to greatness of conception, found its voice in Shakespeare. There was the atmosphere that made him possible: that the age, with its buoyant hopefulness, its limitless ambitions and

splendid fruition, of which he was the "soul." But in 1623, when Jonson wrote the lines in which this expression occurs, most of the Elizabethans had passed away; the petty years of the first James were drawing to a close, and the troublous times of Charles close at hand. For twenty years past, Elizabethan political traditions had been gradually reversed; our navies rotted in the dockyards while laden galleons from the Indies drew unmolested into Spanish ports. Raleigh, at the behest of Spain, had been sent to the block, and an English prince now kissed the "bearde" which Drake had metaphorically "singed." England had fallen from her greatness, upon a day of truckling policies and little men, and the nation, dimly conscious of the fall, grew querulous and ill at ease. Extensions of the royal prerogative, which in the great Elizabeth had been overlooked or condoned, in James were questioned, and later, in Charles, openly challenged.

Protestantism, which during the earlier years of Elizabeth had represented to the mass of the people, more an opposition to the political designs of Spain than a protest against the religious dogmas of Rome, had for many years been assuming a deeper religious and ethical significance. Though Spain, as Rome's arm militant, had ceased to be actively aggressive, the nation began to apprehend reactionary forces at work within itself, equally menacing to its religious and civil liberties.

In 1620 the Mayflower and Speedwell, with the firstlings of the Puritan migration, sailed from Plymouth and the wrath to come; but a larger and as stern a company of their fellows, with equal, if not greater fortitude, remained to face the growing issues; and later faced them, through the slow years; upon the battlefield, and in the council chamber; upon the gallows and the block, working out for England and their brethren over-seas, a solid basis of good government upon which has since been founded the still developing superstructures of liberty they each, in these days, under different forms enjoy.

So, in the latter days of Shakespeare's life, began in England a period of social and political reaction and unrest,

which ended only after the body politic had been cleansed and cured of that royal canker, the race of the Stuarts. It was a slow and tedious operation, and occupied about a hundred years. During this period, in the presence of these more pressing and material needs, poetry and the drama decayed, and Shakespeare, except by a few, was neglected and forgotten. Between the years 1623 — when the first Folio was issued — and the end of the 17th century, but three small editions of his dramas were published. In the same years, *Venus and Adonis* was published three times, and *Lucrece* but twice. The Sonnets, with their wealth of personal significance, were so little valued, that in the hundred years succeeding their first issue, in 1609, they were published but once, and then in such a mutilated and garbled form, that it is plainly evident their editor, or publisher, had no suspicion of their personal nature. It was not till ninety-three years after Shakespeare's death that any serious attempt was made to collect biographical data and tradition in the form of a written life.

In the year 1709, Nicholas Rowe issued the first critical edition of the plays. To this he prefixed a life of our poet, which, notwithstanding the diligent research and patient investigation of the two centuries that have since elapsed, still remains our principal source of knowledge respecting his actual personality. Many records have since been unearthed which have greatly extended our knowledge of Elizabethan life and its stage traditions, and which have also enabled us, more definitely, to trace our poet's career, but little or nothing has since been discovered, which throws new light upon his actual personality. Through all these years, however, his fame has steadily increased, until at the present time, all nations and literatures acknowledge his excellence and pre-eminence; and yet, the human entity; the actual man, who for fifty-three mortal years embodied this elemental and transcendent genius, remains today, to the world at large, practically still but a name.

We have, withal, many books by many hands purporting to be "Lives" of Shakespeare; all are necessarily based upon

the same bare outlines of actual fact, but, as is inevitable where so much must be left to the individual imagination, presenting widely differing, and, at times, strongly opposed characterisations of the man. Some writers, carried away by their admiration for the genius of the poet and dramatist, so apotheosise the man that their conceptions display more rapture of worship than sanity of judgment. This, if a fault, is under the circumstances a most natural one and, by a lover of Shakespeare, easily condoned. Other more modern writers there are, however, who, recognising this tendency in their predecessors, have so narrowed their conceptions to fit the meagre details of actuality we possess, that no effort of the imagination will link the stilted figures they present with the great creator of the dramas. These rule and measure critics, with too much care for the meagre actual, at times magnify an incident into a strong personal characteristic, and, from this supposed characteristic, develop a whole character. To instance this: it is known that Shakespeare went to law to collect money due him; it is known also that he attained comparative affluence in the practice of his profession; hence, we have presented to us, a hard-headed and selfish man of business, ever so mindful of his own pecuniary interests that he lightly prostitutes truth, his personal dignity, and his great gift of poetry to the one end of sordid gain. Nothwithstanding the vaguely idealistic, or grossly materialistic, conceptions of what we might call the professional Shakespeareans, it is a significant fact, that when the occasional critic, or man of letters, (such as Walter Bagehot, or in our own day the late Sir Leslie Stephen, and last but not least, Prof. Georg Brandes, of Copenhagen), wanders into Shakespearean fields, we have realised, and even defined for us, a conception of the personality of our poet much more human and in harmony with common sense.

Shakespeare's absolute dramatic objectivity has long been held by commentators as a cardinal point of true Shakespearean criticism: to question this is sacrilege; it is to call in question the master's art, yet, the critics whom I have

mentioned, though they acknowledge acquiescence with accepted critical formulæ, must necessarily have ridden roughshod over this belief to have evolved the truer characterisations they have given us. Now I contend, that no unbiased reader (forgetting the commentators and keeping in mind even the scanty outlines of Shakespeare's career we possess) can make a careful, and (as far as possible) chronological study of Shakespeare's poems and plays, without realising a conception of the poet's personality, far more intimate, interesting, —and because of the very infirmities of nature which such a study will suggest, if indeed, not reveal — far more lovable than the dim demigod of some, or the truckling plebeian sycophant of other accepted authorities. True as this may be, and while each may satisfy his own consciousness with his own conceived ideal, it would be extremely difficult to convey this concrete conception to the intelligence of another, or even to explain the mental processes by which we may each have attained it, without advancing and proving some bases, or abutments of fact, from which to fling our bridges of inference. Here, however, the difficulty begins; not that such basic proof is entirely lacking, but, that when considered alone and unrelieved by the extended story and expanded character, it may be considered by many, better left untraced. "Shakespeare's life is a fine mystery" writes Dickens, and he hopes that nothing may ever come to light to reveal it. Others, besides Dickens have voiced this thought, which seems to be born of a fear by no means flattering to the object of their solicitude. The source which seems to awaken this fear for our poet, besides giving ground for doubt regarding his moral infallibility, when properly analysed, happily supplies us also with a key to reveal other and nobler phases of his personality, as yet unsuspected even by his idolators.

However objective Shakespeare *may appear* to be in his dramatic work, (I use the qualification advisedly), in his Sonnets, at least, he is avowedly subjective. Here we have one source of research whence we may obtain some definite clews to lead us from the work to the man. That a fuller

value for these poems as personal documents has not long ago been realised and expounded, is a mystery to be explained only by the fact that they have been most profoundly neglected by the majority of Shakespearean students. It is now over a hundred years since that prince of critics, Edmund Malone, first suggested their personal nature, and showed in Thorpe's arrangement, their plain division into two series; one, of one hundred and twenty-six Sonnets addressed to a man, and the remaining twenty-eight to a woman. Since Malone's recognition of their personal nature, and their division into two series, the only suggestions of value tending towards their true solution, were, firstly, Dr. Drake's in 1817, suggesting Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, as the patron addressed in the first series; and secondly, Prof. Minto's happy inference regarding George Chapman as the rival poet. A third and equally valuable suggestion, as bearing upon the hidden story of the Sonnets — though not directly connected with their history — is the inference of the anonymous critic, who first suggested the identities of Henry Wriothesley, and our poet, with the two characters satirised as "Henry Willobie" and "W S" in the poem of *Willobie his Avisa*, which was first published in the year 1594. Should it be conclusively proved that this poem was directed against the amatory escapades of our poet and his young friend and patron, at, or about, the date of its production, its chronological value alone would be very great. It would give us a definite date for the production of the particular group of Sonnets in which incidents are reflected of a nature very similar to, if not identical with, its own satirical story. A still greater value may be realised by the possibility that the story found in these two sources, *Willobie his Avisa*, and the Sonnets, might be correlated with the incidents, characters and action of some of the plays produced at and about the same period.

About fifteen years ago I first became seriously interested in the personal nature of Shakespeare's Sonnets. I had read them before that time merely as impersonal lyric verse. I was unacquainted with most of the Sonnet literature, and

knew little of the various theories that from time to time had been advanced concerning them. The Sonnets interested me by their lyrical beauty altogether aside from any hidden story that they might possibly contain. Having the faculty of memorizing easily, and unconsciously, verse that interests me, it was not long until I had memorized nearly all of them. In mentally conning them over from time to time it soon dawned upon me that there was something in them more intimate and personal than in other lyrical verse and I began to analyse the Sonnets themselves for light, not yet seeking outside information on the subject.

That most of them were addressed to a man, and a portion of them to a woman, were conclusions at which I arrived by my own unaided judgment. I reached other conclusions independently in regard to them that my later reading showed me had been reached by others many years before.

I now began an exhaustive study of the Sonnet literature, but believe that I would have reached my present light regarding them much sooner and more easily had I never done so. Much of the Sonnet literature not only gave me no light or help, but actually clouded my vision and tangled my clews.

With the exception of Malone's conclusions in regard to their personal nature, and his division of them into two series, one to a man and one to a woman; Dr. Drake's suggestion of the Earl of Southampton as the patron addressed; Prof. Minto's happy inference regarding George Chapman as the rival poet, and the idea of the anonymous critic who first pointed out the possible indicative reference to Shakespeare in the poem of *Willobie his Avisa*, all other original theories regarding the Sonnets and their hidden story have been hindrances instead of aids.

The Sonnet theorists were, however, by no means the worst stumbling-blocks; those critics and commentators of the plays who were without theories, and utterly opposed to all personal interpretations of the Sonnets, were worse still. Many writers whose names loom large in Shakespearean criticism are in this latter class. The dogmatic pronounce-

ments of some of these great ones against a personal theory deterred me for some time in my investigations. I am now of the opinion, that many honest and painstaking critics and commentators in neglecting the Sonnets, have missed the solution of many of their greatest difficulties, and have ignored the key to many supposed-to-be-insoluble mysteries in the plays.

I shall forbear from rehearsing, comparing or combating the various theories that have hitherto been evolved regarding the Sonnets. I shall briefly outline their history and tell their story as I find it with due acknowledgment of the assistance given me by the suggestions and inferences already mentioned.

CHAPTER III

Analysis of the Sequential Order of the Sonnets in Thorpe's publication of 1609

THE earliest record we possess of Sonnets by Shakespeare is in the year 1598, when Francis Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia*, mentions Shakespeare, and refers to "his sugred Sonnets among his private friends." In the following year, two of the Sonnets, those numbered 138 and 144, appeared in a somewhat garbled form in a collection of poems by various hands — but all attributed to Shakespeare — published by William Jaggard under the title of *The Passionate Pilgrim*. We have no further record of Sonnets by Shakespeare until the year 1609, when the whole collection as we now know them and a poem entitled *A Lover's Complaint*, were published by Thomas Thorpe, with the following title page:

SHAKE-SPEARES | Sonnets. | Never before Imprinted. | At London | By G. ELD for T. T. and are | to be solde by William Aspley. | 1609. |

This edition was issued by Thorpe with the following dedication, evidently of his own making.

TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .
THESE . INSUING . SONNETS .
MR. W. H. . ALL . HAPPINESSE .
AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .
PROMISED
BY
OUR . EVER-LIVING . POET
WISHETH .
THE . WELL-WISHING .
ADVENTURER . IN .
SETTING .
FORTH .

T. T.

Nothing relating to the Sonnets has been so misleading to honest students, and so fruitful of will-o'-the-wisp theories, as this dedication.

Most theories regarding the Sonnets, based in any way upon this dedication or the initials "W. H.," assume that the Sonnets were published with Shakespeare's cognizance and the dedication penned with his sanction, and that the initials "W. H." indicate the person addressed in the first series, running from 1 to 126.

It is my purpose to demonstrate that the Sonnets were private epistles, most of them written by Shakespeare to the Earl of Southampton, and the remainder to a woman (whose identity shall be established), and that they were not intended by Shakespeare for publication and sale. It shall also be made evident that they were written between the years 1592–93 and 1598–99, that they are incomplete and out of their sequential and chronological order; and that verses are included with them that are not by Shakespeare.

It appears evident then, that they were not published with his knowledge and that he had no hand in this dedication. I will adduce evidence that the Sonnets were obtained and published surreptitiously by personal enemies of our poet, in the endeavor to revamp an old scandal, (connected with persons and incidents referred to in certain of the Sonnets) which was first circulated about Shakespeare in 1594, and again, with more pointedly indicative intention, in the year 1596, again, in 1599, and still again, in 1605 and 1609; the Sonnets being published at the latter date to make public the basis of the scandal.

After 1609, no other editions of the Sonnets were published until the year 1640, when they were issued in a rearranged form and sequence, under various headings, with the title: "POEMS: Written by Wil. SHAKESPEARE, Gent. Printed at London by Tho. Cotes, and are to be sold by John Benson, dwelling in St. Dunstanes Churchyard 1640."

Eight of the Sonnets included in Thorpe's edition are missing from Benson's publication.

We may judge from Benson's edition, that whatever autobiographical interest may lie hidden in the Sonnets, it had been quite lost to sight by this time. With Benson's, and with later editions, we have nothing to do in this inquiry.

All the early external evidence we possess in regard to the Sonnets, is their publication by Thorpe in 1609; the publication of two of these same Sonnets by Jaggard in 1599, and Meres' reference to Sonnets by Shakespeare in 1598: whatever further light we would have concerning them we must seek within the Sonnets. To do this we are necessarily driven back upon Thorpe's edition.

Whoever reads the Sonnets carefully and critically, will become aware of an immense superiority in maturity of thought and poetic excellence displayed in certain groups over others. The same growth and development of mental power and literary art that we find in Shakespeare when we compare an early play like *The Comedy of Errors* with a later play, — though only a few years later — such as *Romeo and Juliet*, will be found by a comparison of different groups of Sonnets. For instance, let us compare Sonnets 8, 9 and 10 with Sonnets 115 and 116; they are most palpably of different periods. The later numbered Sonnets showing the greater power and maturity: but again, when we compare Sonnets 18, 19 and 25 with Sonnets 95 and 96, we find the early numbered Sonnets displaying the more practiced hand. Now here, while we have presumptive evidence of Sonnet writing during different periods of Shakespeare's development, we see also that the Sonnets in Thorpe's arrangement are evidently chronologically misplaced.

That Shakespeare's Sonnet writing extended over a period of at least three years, we have conclusive evidence in one of the Sonnets, which mentions that period as having elapsed since his Sonnet writing had first begun. The entire period was, in fact, between six and seven years, that is, between 1592 and 1598–99.

The same palpable growth of mental power and poetic facility to be found by a comparison of the plays, usually assigned to these earlier years, with those of the later years

mentioned, will be recognised also in the Sonnets when they are chronologically rearranged.

If the Sonnets in Thorpe's edition are chronologically misplaced, is it not still more probable that they are also sequentially disordered? That is, assuming for the present that they were originally written in sequences, or, a sequence.

It has generally been accepted that in Thorpe's collection the Sonnets are in their true sequential order, though some critics admit that it is difficult at times to find continuity of feeling or thought. Such unanimity in an error so palpable, arises not so much from lack of critical judgment as from lack of a serious study of the Sonnets themselves. The Sonnets and the questions they involve have been entirely neglected or considered very casually, by the majority of the critics and commentators who have devoted years of interested study to the plays.

When I first undertook a careful analysis of Thorpe's arrangement, I found so many plain sequences of two and three Sonnets, that I advanced the opinion that the whole series was originally written in such small sequences as letters in verse. The very plain sequence numbered from 1 to 17, gave me pause, and later I also found one or two groups of five or six Sonnets in what palpably appeared to be their true sequential order. In one Sonnet, No. 77, I find the expression, *this book*:—

"And of *this book* this learning mayst thou taste."

This expression evidently alluded to a larger number of Sonnets than two or three; the Sonnet in which the expression appears is preceded by only one or two Sonnets, that show sequential continuity, and is followed by a Sonnet exhibiting quite a different subject and mental attitude. I now surmised that this Sonnet was probably a part, and evidently the ending of a larger sequence to which the term *book* might be applied. In Sonnet No. 23, I find the expression, *my books*,

O, let *my books* be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast.

This appeared to me to be an allusion to Sonnets previously produced by our poet, which had evidently been arranged by him in *books* or sequences for his friend.

If then, the Sonnets were produced in sequences, I inferred that each of these sequences would probably be of the same size and of a conventional number.

I now searched the Sonnets carefully, seeking for evidence of palpable sequential disarrangement, and soon found one or two Sonnets that seemed to have no possible connection with the contexts given them by Thorpe, and which also appeared to link themselves perfectly in manner and matter with other Sonnets, widely separated from them, that showed equal incongruity in their present connections. For instance, let us compare Sonnet 24, with its present contexts 23 and 25.

SONNET 23.

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

SONNET 24.

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.

Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

SONNET 25.

Let those who are in favour with their stars
Of public honour and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlook'd for joy in that I honour most.
Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd,
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd:
Then happy I, that love and am beloved,
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

Here we find no connection in thought or theme. When Sonnet 24, is succeeded by Sonnets 46 and 47, a perfect context and a continued sequence appears.

SONNET 24.

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 'tis held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

SONNET 46.

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impanneled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part:
As thus; mine eye's due is thine outward part,
And my heart's right thine inward love of heart.

SONNET 47.

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast
And to the painted banquet bids my heart;
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me;
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

Again, let us take Sonnet 56, and compare it with its present contexts 55 and 57; no possible connection is to be found.

SONNET 55.

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme!
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.

When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

SONNET 56.

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite;
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view;
Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd, more rare.

SONNET 57.

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a sad slave, stay and think it nought
Save, where you are how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love that in your will,
Though you do anything, he thinks no ill.

But, let Sonnet 56 be followed by Sonnets 97 and 98, and again we see true sequential order.

SONNET 56.

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.
Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view;
Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd, more rare.

SONNET 97.

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness everywhere!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 'tis with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

SONNET 98.

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.

Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

I found many other instances of equal contextual incongruity, and now become fairly sure of the following things: that many of the Sonnets in Thorpe's arrangement are chronologically and sequentially misplaced; that the whole body of Sonnets was written during a period of at least three years; that part of them were written to a man, and part of them to a woman, and in *books*, or sequences, of a specific and conventional number.

I now reasoned, that if the Sonnets were written in *books*, or sequences, and at different times during a period of years, they were in all probability the same Sonnets alluded to by Meres in 1598, as "his sugred Sonnets among his private friends," and therefore, that at least those addressed to a man, though written to one person, were evidently passed among that person's friends to be read.

These *books*, or sequences, were in all likelihood manuscripts of our poet's, fastened together in some crude manner; probably either stitched or gummed. Seeing then that the Sonnets, though written in, and before, 1598, were not published until 1609, we may reasonably infer that these *books*, or sequences, in passing from hand to hand would become more or less disarranged, and, it is also probable, that some of them may have been of such an intimately personal nature that they would be removed by their owner and not allowed to circulate. It is also likely that in the numerous mischances that such manuscripts would meet in the long term of years which elapsed between their production and eventual publication, some of them would be lost. We know that

between 1609, when they were first published, and 1640, when they were published by Benson, who evidently worked from an incomplete copy of the first issue, that eight of the Sonnets were lost, and had no other copies of the first edition, besides that from which Benson worked, remained in existence, Benson's edition would now be our sole authority. Had Benson possessed a complete copy of the earlier issue, there is no tangible reason why he should have discarded the eight Sonnets that are lacking in his publication.

It seems certain that Thorpe in some manner secured and worked from Shakespeare's original manuscripts. In arranging the Sonnets, even in their present disordered state, he showed that he recognised the fact that they were originally written to two people, by dividing them into two series, placing the twelve line verses that are numbered 126, at the end of the first series; but that his knowledge in making this division was not perfect, is demonstrated by the fact that two Sonnets, that are plainly to be identified with the series addressed to a man, are included in the latter group.

Though the Sonnets as a whole were probably disorganized in the manuscripts from which Thorpe worked, he apparently found several small sequences, and one fairly large sequence, (1 to 17), in their original order.

In instances where Thorpe found the Sonnets disarranged and out of their sequential order, he appears to have attempted to reproduce sequential continuity in his arrangement. That he succeeded fairly well in this, is evidenced by the fact that the order he gave the Sonnets has remained alsmot unquestioned for three hundred years.

In placing the first seventeen Sonnets in their present order, I believe that he did so because he found them already together in this order in the manuscripts. In placing this sequence as the earliest of the whole series, he was undoubtedly correct and was guided, either by extant knowledge of the object for which they were written, or by the internal evidence of the group; their tone being conventional and distant when compared with that of the

later Sonnets. The sixteenth Sonnet proves the early date of this sequence in the expression "my pupil pen;" and the whole group lacks the facility of expression and maturity of thought of most of the later Sonnets.

From the eighteenth Sonnet onwards to the verses numbered 126, though two and three Sonnets are often to be found in sequential order; and in one or two instances even five or six Sonnets may be found rightly placed, the most palpable sequential and chronological disorder will become apparent in Thorpe's order when they are compared with the rearrangement in their original *books*.

Before attempting to arrange the Sonnets in separate sequences, I took two complete copies of them and removed the pages, each page containing a single Sonnet; these I spread out in Thorpe's order, from 1 to 154. I then moved the loose pages here and there as I found, or thought I found, true contexts. By degrees, as I worked the Sonnets into contextual place, those numbered from 1 to 126, divided naturally into seven groups, displaying divergent moods, quite distinct and readily distinguishable each from the others. Two or three of these groups are complete in twenty Sonnet sequences; from this I infer that all of the Sonnets were originally written in sequences of twenty, (a number frequently used by the Sonneteers of that day), and that where a *book* lacks this number, those lacking to make twenty are lost. Four of the groups lack one or two Sonnets, and one lacks eight Sonnets for completion; this latter group containing matter of a more private nature than any of the more complete sequences. From these seven groups, I find in all thirteen Sonnets missing. When the Sonnets are read in the new order I give them, with this fact borne in mind, I believe a light and meaning will appear even to the most casual reader.

I am now convinced that Sonnets numbered from 127 to 152, in Thorpe's arrangement, are the small remains of what was originally at least two and possibly three or four, twenty Sonnet sequences written to a woman. From this series, however, I will remove the Sonnets numbered 129

and 146, and place them in their true contexts in two of the sequences in the first series. I also remove the 21st Sonnet from the larger series and place it in its true connection in the series written to a woman.

Sonnets 153 and 154, are two exercises upon the one subject and have no connection with any of the Sonnets hitherto mentioned and no personal significance.

Sonnet 145 is not by Shakespeare; it was probably secured by Thorpe, or his employer (along with some of the other manuscripts), from the woman to whom the smaller series of the Sonnets was written, and is possibly the effusion of some of her other admirers; for that she had many, and that poets, and would-be poets were among them, shall presently become apparent, when the intention and authorship of the poem called *Willobie his Avisa* is explained.

The rearrangement of the Sonnets into the seven sequences was made at odd intervals during a period of several months. During this time I read and re-read them many times, and finally put them away and did not look at them again, in the new sequences I had made, for about six years. In the interval I devoted myself to a consideration of those plays which were most probably written in the same years as the Sonnets. I also searched the State Papers and other contemporary documents for light upon the Earl of Southampton's life, and upon the lives of those men with whom he is known to have been intimate. The story unfolded, little by little, each new fact and date more strongly confirming my original theory regarding the correlative thread of subjective interest to be found in the plays of the Sonnet period. After a lapse of about six years, I renewed my reading of the Sonnets in the sequences I had formed, and now found only three changes to be made in my old rearrangement. In the series to the Dark Lady, which I had not hitherto examined closely for the possible connection of any of these Sonnets with those in the larger group to the patron, I found Sonnets numbered 129 and 144 to be plainly connected with the larger series, and the

21st Sonnet, as clearly connected with the Sonnets to the Dark Lady.

In this six years' interval, I also found evidence of the real reason for the publication of the Sonnets in 1609, making any further search for Thorpe's mysterious "Mr. W. H." unnecessary. This gentleman will be found to be a literary progenitor of Mrs. Gamp's friend "Mrs. Harris."

CHAPTER IV

The Drama of the Sonnets

THOUGH mystified as to the details of the story in the Sonnets by the imperfect chronological order and sequence of Thorpe's arrangement, many critics have recognised their personal nature and their possible autobiographical value. That a young nobleman and a woman are addressed in them has been acknowledged. That our poet's friendship with the former passes through stages of acquaintanceship, intimacy, doubt, estrangement and reconciliation is also evident. In the first group, showing sequential continuity (1 to 17) we find a more or less formal acquaintance; the Sonnets are of a conventional nature, such as any poet might write to any youthful patron. Their subject and object appear to show influences other than the poet's own volition. The whole group is an argument urging a young man to marriage. It is extremely unlikely that Shakespeare, at this early stage of his acquaintanceship, would take upon himself advice of such a purely personal nature without being instigated to it by, or having the authority of, the youth's friends. It also seems unlikely that Shakespeare would urge a youth of eighteen to marriage, unless at the suggestion of interested friends. In the third Sonnet we have the lines,

> Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
> Calls back the lovely April of her prime.

Shakespeare must, therefore, have made the acquaintance of the youth's mother, or, at least, have seen her at this time.

From the 18th Sonnet onwards to the 126th, the story becomes very much involved as we dimly trace it

through Thorpe's disordered sequence; yet we are aware of four figures involved in the incidents: the poet himself; the young man addressed; the woman with whom he and the poet became entangled, and a rival poet who seeks the youth's patronage. We note a period, or periods, of absence, when our poet is on his travels and writes to his friend from a distance. We learn that the friend becomes enamoured of the poet's mistress and involved in an intrigue with her, and that for this offence he, later on, seeks and obtains pardon. Confidence and friendship are restored and the poet invokes his muse to new praises of his patron. A short period of undisturbed amity succeeds, then a rival poet seeks to supplant Shakespeare in his friend's regard: behind the diffidence and between the lines of the Sonnets, in which he acknowledges his own poetical inadequacy, and admits the art and merit of his opponent, we read a confidence in his own verses which is fully justified by their masterly rhetoric. A period, or periods, of silence follow. We also recognise a phase, or phases, of mental and spiritual dejection on Shakespeare's part, when he dwells on "graves and worms and epitaphs" and sighs for "restful death;" his conscience troubles him and he is ill at ease; he incites his soul to revolt against the bonds of the flesh and to seek eternal things; he ceases to take pleasure even in his Sonnets to his friend,

"With what I most enjoy contented least,"

to whom he bids a perfunctory farewell. One of the periods of silence suggested evidently now occurs; later on the acquaintance is again renewed. In the earlier Sonnets the patron has transgressed and has been forgiven: now, our poet is at fault; scandal concerning him is abroad; he does not deny the reports but challenges the right of judgment on the part of his accusers; he defies the world's opinion, content to know his "shames and praises" from his friend; he analyses his own faults and shortcomings and deplores the public means of his livelihood which subject him to the conditions and temptations that brand his name; he retorts against his

critics, who evidently have accused him of time-service and of mercenary motives in the praise of his friend. In the end he rejoices in the sincerity and steadfastness of his own affection and in his friend's constancy and devotion.

All of this, lacking the coherence given by the rearranged sequences, is to be found even in Thorpe's disordered arrangement of the Sonnets. A comparison of the rearranged *books* of Sonnets with those plays usually conceded to have been written during the Sonnet period, will give us some slight guidance. If, however, we can succeed in establishing the identity of the several figures indicated in the Sonnets: the patron, the rival poet, and the Dark Lady, and can get any light upon their lives at and about the period we approximate for the production of the Sonnets, by correlating this data with such facts as are known regarding Shakespeare during the same period, the enigma may be solved.

In 1817 Dr. Nathan Drake advanced the theory that the Earl of Southampton was the young man addressed in the series of Sonnets numbered from 1 to 126. He based his judgment solely upon the fact that Shakespeare had dedicated *Venus and Adonis* in 1593, and *Lucrece* in 1594, to that nobleman. While many critics have agreed with the plausibility of Dr. Drake's theory, no advance towards its confirmation has since been made, and it still remains a matter of opinion.

In 1818, a Mr. Bright conceived the idea that the Earl of Pembroke was the youth addressed in the Sonnets; assuming that the letters "W. H." of Thorpe's dedication indicated his name "William Herbert." He based his theory upon the fact that Shakespeare's theatrical partners, Heming and Condel, had dedicated the folio of 1623 to that nobleman. Mr. Bright has had many followers.

In 1889, a most ingenious and exhaustive exposition and development of Mr. Bright's idea was propounded by the Rev. Thomas Tyler. This book came to my notice within a few months of its publication, and at a period when my knowledge of the Sonnet theories was in a nebulous and

formative stage. For a time Mr. Tyler's argument seemed to me to be a very plausible solution of the Sonnet mystery. A more careful study of his story and theories developed what appeared to me to be flaws in his chain of evidence.

Mr. Tyler assigns the earliest of the Sonnets to the year 1598, and places the whole series between that year and 1601. A comparison of the Sonnets as a whole with the plays usually assigned to these years, gave rise to doubts in my mind, as to this late date for the Sonnets: it was also difficult to believe Shakespeare capable of the time-serving sycophancy and cold-blooded ingratitude with which Mr. Tyler's interpretation of the 124th Sonnet inferentially charges him.

While still giving allegiance to Mr. Tyler's theory, I set myself to a more critical study of the subject, in the hope of still further elucidating his story and fitting it more psychologically to the conception of the man Shakespeare, which I had evolved from a critical study of the Sonnets and plays. Discontinuing for a time further quest of knowledge regarding either Pembroke or Southampton, I devoted myself to a consideration of the identity of the rival poet.

Various poets have been suggested by past critics for this figure with small reasonable evidence upon which to support their suggestions. Professor Minto's inference regarding George Chapman in this connection appealed to me more favorably than any of the others and seemed to offer a good field for further investigation regarding its truth.

I began a diligent study of Chapman's poems with the idea that if Shakespeare's Sonnets regarding the rival poet were really directed against Chapman, that poet would probably have been informed concerning Shakespeare's opposition, and in some way, would have taken cognizance of it. It also occurred to me that it might be possible to produce evidence of Chapman's dedicatory advances to Southampton's favor, that called forth Shakespeare's rival poet *book* of Sonnets. It was not long until other and stronger evidence than that advanced by Professor Minto

appeared, more fully identifying Chapman as the rival poet. It became evident also, that an attitude of hostility had developed between Shakespeare and Chapman as early as the years 1594 and 1595, and that, at about this time, Chapman had read and criticised the group of Sonnets numbered from 1 to 17. As all arguments concerning the Earl of Pembroke, as the youth addressed, are based upon the assumption that the earliest of Shakespeare's Sonnets were written in and after the year 1598, the new evidence of their much earlier production effectually disposed of this theory. I then fell back upon Dr. Drake's suggestion of the Earl of Southampton as the patron indicated, and have satisfied myself in regard to its truth.

The identity of the Dark Lady still remained a mystery, and for a long time seemed to me an insoluble one. There existed one possible clew to this apparent enigma. In the year 1594, there was published a poem entitled *Willobie his Avisa, or The True Picture of a Modest Maid and a Chaste and Constant Wife.* In some prefatory verses to this poem the name of Shakespeare appears, for the first time in literature. This reference to Shakespeare, taken in conjunction with the fact that a character under the initials "W. S." is featured in a somewhat disagreeable manner in the poem itself, appeared to have a satirical significance. Having satisfied myself that many of Shakespeare's Sonnets had been written previous to, and about, the date of this publication (1594), and finding a triangular love affair, such as we find in the Sonnets — depicting two men, who are friends, in love with the same woman — reflected also in *Willobie his Avisa*, it occurred to me that the Sonnets and the latter poem might refer to the same persons and incidents. That *Willobie his Avisa*, contained matter of a satirical, and even of a libelous character, and that the person, or persons libelled, possessed influence in official quarters, is evidenced by the recorded fact, that the poem was condemned and burned by the public censor upon its third publication in the year 1599. I now reasoned that the most practicable way to prove, or disprove, that this

poem referred to Shakespeare and his friends would be, if possible, to identify the real author, as it is very evident that the name of the alleged editor, Hadrian Dorrell, is a pseudonym. With this object in view, I made an exhaustive search of Elizabethan verse, keeping in mind the imagery, idioms, and metre of *Willobie his Avisa*, in the hope of finding a resemblance. I gave especial attention to the works of those poets of whose opposition, or enmity, to Shakespeare we have either hint, or record, but failed to discover any poems bearing even the remotest resemblance in either style, or metre, to *Willobie his Avisa.* In several anonymous poems that have come down to us, in the literary flotsam and jetsam of that teeming age, I found many verses exhibiting most remarkable resemblances to this poem. These, however, while revealing to me other poems presumably from the same pen, on account of their anonymity, did not give me much help in my search for the author. I continued my investigations, searching for evidence even in the most unlikely sources, and, curiously enough, eventually found what I sought in the least likely of all.

Included in Spenser's *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe*, which was published in 1595, are several poems by other hands; the names or initials of the authors in some instances being attached; in other intsances the poems are anonymous. One of these latter poems, entitled *An Elegie, or Friends Passion for his Astrophel, Written upon the death of the Right Honourable Sir Philip Sidney*, which was anonymous in the original publication, was shown by John Henry Todd in 1809, to be the work of Matthew Roydon. The only edition of Spenser's Poems, I then possessed, did not credit this poem of Roydon, and at that time I was unacquainted with Todd's edition. In reading this poem in a collection of Spenser's Poems, I naturally assumed that I was reading a poem by that poet. Even in reading it casually my attention was arrested by its close resemblance in metre, diction, and rhythm to *Willobie his Avisa;* upon a closer examination and comparison of the two poems, the same-

ness of imagery, and the similarity of the treatment of their very diverse subjects, satisfied my judgment that the two poems were by one and the same hand; yet I could not believe Spenser capable of such arrant bathos as either the *Elegie*, or *Willobie his Avisa*. A short search showed me that Todd had already proved Matthew Roydon's authorship of the *Elegie*. Now, here was a conjunction of evidence I had not hoped for in my most sanguine moments. I had previously searched for the "rival poet," following Professor Minto's plausible suggestion regarding Chapman, and having satisfied myself of Chapman's identity with that figure, had put the matter from my mind: I then entered upon, what was apparently an entirely new phase of the Sonnet mystery, if, indeed, it was in any way connected with the Sonnets, viz., the authorship of *Willobie his Avisa*, and, having identified the author, found him to be George Chapman's intimate friend and associate, in fact the very person to whom, in 1594 and 1595, he wrote the dedications by which I had previously been enabled, definitely, to identify Chapman as the rival poet.

Taking into consideration Roydon's authorship of *Willobie his Avisa*, his friendship with Chapman, and the dates of the publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, and those poems of Chapman's, through which I had succeeded in tracing his hostility to Shakespeare, little doubt remained in my mind that Roydon's poem was also directed against our poet, and that the woman he portrayed under the name of Avisa was the same person as the Dark Lady of the Sonnets. A more careful consideration of *Willobie his Avisa* soon removed whatever doubt remained and revealed the identity of that interesting figure.

When I obtained the first clew that gave me hope that the Dark Lady might be identified, the possibility naturally occurred to me that my evidence might be linked with the posthumous gossip of John Aubrey and Anthony Wood, concerning Shakespeare's alleged relations with Mistress Davenant, wife of John Davenant, who in 1604 and onwards, conducted the Crown Inn at Oxford, but I dismissed the

idea from my mind as being trite, assuming that London must necessarily have been the scene of the story's action. Thereafter I followed my clews, without any foregone objective in mind and eventually was led, by most convincing evidence, to a full belief in my discarded hypothesis. The Dark Lady of the Sonnets was certainly the wife of an Oxford innkeeper. That he was John Davenant, the argument to follow shall, I believe, abundantly demonstrate.

CHAPTER V

The Authorship and Satirical Intention of Willobie his Avisa

THE poem entitled *Willobie his Avisa*, or *The True Picture of a Modest Maide, and of a Chaste and Constant Wife*, was entered on the Stationers' Registers in September, 1594.

Aside from other considerations, this poem is remarkable in being the earliest known publication in which Shakespeare is actually mentioned by name. The mention of our poet's name occurs in the following introductory verses:

> In Lavine land though Livie boast,
> There hath beene seene a Constant Dame:
> Though Rome lament that she have lost
> The Gareland of her rarest fame,
> Yet now we see that heere is found,
> As great a Faith in English ground:
>
> Though Collatine have dearely bought,
> To high renowne, a lasting life,
> And found, that most in vaine have sought,
> To have a Faire and Constant wife,
> Yet Tarquine pluckt his glistering grape,
> And Shake-speare, paints poore Lucrece rape.

That a portion of this poem alluded to Shakespeare and some of his acquaintances has been suspected by many critics, but no serious attempt has ever been made to trace the possible connection. The interest of critics in this poem, as referring to Shakespeare, is due to the mention of his name in the verses quoted, coupled with the fact that two characters under the initials "H. W." and "W. S." (which coincide with the initials of Southampton's and Shakespeare's names) are introduced into the later Cantos

of the poem. It has also been noticed in this connection, that there is possibly indicative intention in the use of the words "new actor," "old player," "Comedy," and "Tragedy" in the prose introduction to Canto 44, in which the characters mentioned are first introduced.

Had we not full assurance of the topical and libelous nature of *Willobie his Avisa*, in the fact of its condemnation by the public censor upon its third publication in the year 1599, a very casual reading of the introduction will show a hidden meaning. To the issue of 1594, was prefixed an "Epistle," "To the gentle and courteous Reader," which is signed Hadrian Dorrell. To the issue of 1596, there was appended a similar epistle signed by the same name, entitled, "The Apologie, shewing the true meaning of *Willobie his Avisa*." The name of Hadrian Dorrell is not to be found elsewhere in Elizabethan literature.

Evidence will be adduced showing that Matthew Roydon was the author, not only of *Willobie his Avisa*, but of the "Epistle to the Reader" and the "Apologie," as well as of the several shorter poems appended to these publications. It will also be shown that it was a habit of Roydon's to publish anonymously or under pseudonyms.

In the "Epistle to the Reader" the alleged editor, Hadrian Dorrell, informs us, that his friend and chamberfellow, M. Henry Willobie, "a young man and a scholar of very good hope," leaving England for the continent, "on her majesty's service," delivered to him "the key of his study and the use of all his books till his return." He further states, that among Willobie's papers he found the poem he named *Willobie his Avisa*, of which he writes:

> I fancied (it) so much that I have ventured so far upon his friendship as to publish it without his consent.

He then discusses the meaning and intention of the poem, and argues, pro and con, as to whether Avisa is a reality or an abstraction. He also considers the name of Avisa and reaches the following conclusion:

> I think it to be a fained name like unto Ovid's Corinna.

He sums up his pretended argument regarding the truth of the story and the reality of Avisa as follows:

These things of the one side lead me to think it altogether a fained matter, both for the names and the substance and a plaine morall plot secretly to insinuate how honest maids and women in such temptations should stand upon their gard, considering the glory and praise that commends a spotless life and the black ignominy and foul contempt that waiteth upon a wicked and dissolute behaviour.

He then retracts this opinion:

Yet of the other side when I do more deeply consider of it and more narrowly weigh every particular point I am driven to think there is something of truth hidden under this shadow. The reasons that move me are these. First in the same paper where I found the name of Avisa written in great letters, as I said before, I found this also written with the author's own hand, *videlicet*, yet I would not have Avisa to be thought a publicke fiction nor a truthless invention, for it may be, that I have at least heard of one in the west of England, in whom the substance of all this hath been verified and in many things the very words specified; which have endured these and many more, and many greater assaults, yet, as heare, she stands unspotted, and unconquered.

Further on, in the "Epistle," still discussing the reality of Avisa, he says:

Whether my author knew or heard of any such I cannot tell, but of mine own knowledge I dare to swear that I know one A. D. that either hath or would, if occasion were so offered, indure these and many greater temptations with a constant mind and settled heart.

After much tiresome platitude upon virtue and chastity, liberally interlarded with references to, and quotations from, classical writers, he concludes:

I return to my author. For the persons and matter, you have heard my conjecture: now for the manner of the composition, disposition, invention and order of the verse, I must leave every mans sense to himselfe, for that which pleaseth me, may not fancie others. But to speake my judgment, the invention, the argument, and the disposition is not common,

nor (that I know) ever handled of any man before in this order. For the composition and order of the verse, although he flie not aloft with the wings of Astrophel, nor dare to compare with the Arcadian sheepheard, or any way match with the dainty Faery Queene, yet shall you find his words and phrases neither triviall nor absurd; but all the whole worke, for the verse pleasant, without hardnesse, smooth without any roughnes, sweete without tediousnesse, easie to bee understood, without harsh absurditie: yeelding a gracious harmony every where to the delight of the Reader.

I have christened it by the name of Willobie his Avisa, because I suppose it was his doing, being written with his owne hand. How hee will like my boldnesse, both in the publishing and naming of it, I know not, For the encouraging and helping of Maides and Wives to hold an honest and constant course against all unhonest and lewde temptations, I have done that I have, I have not added nor detracted anything from the worke it selfe, but have let it passe without altering any thing, onely in the end I have added to fill up some voyd paper certaine fragments and ditties as; a resolution of a chast and constant wife, to the tune of fortune, and the praise of a contented mind, which I found wrapped altogether with this, and therefore knew not whether it did anyway belong unto this or not.

Thus leaving to trouble your patience with farther delaies I commit you to the good governement of Gods Spirit. From my chamber in Oxford this first of October.

HADRIAN DORRELL.

It is very improbable that anyone would take the liberty with a friend's manuscripts, which the alleged Hadrian Dorrell here asserts he has taken, and apparent that the "Epistle to the Reader" was written with the intention of serving as an explanatory guide to the satire, and, at the same time, as a cloak to the libel.

Within two years of the first issue of *Willobie his Avisa*, it was republished. To this issue there was appended an "Apologie," which purported to show "The true meaning of Willobie his Avisa." It is evident that this edition met the same fate as that of 1599, being condemned and burned by order of the public censor, as no copies are now known to exist.

The real intention of the "Apologie" is the same as that of the "Epistle to the Reader;" it is a still more insidious attempt to reveal the satire, and to indicate the identity of the persons caricatured. Hadrian Dorrell pretends to inform us that its issue was necessitated by the fact, that certain persons had taken from the former issue of the poem, "a false and captious construction." He writes: "Therefore, because some have applied this poem as they ought not; I am inforced to speak that which I thought not." He directs his pretended explanation at "one P. C." indicating a recent publication of this year (1596), entitled "*Penelope's Complaint, or a Mirror for Wanton Minions.* Taken out of Homer's *Odessea* and written in English verse by Peter Colse." This poem is in the same peculiar metre as *Willobie his Avisa*, and Roydon's *Elegie.* It also exhibits the same glaring characteristic features of Roydon's mind and style so strongly displayed in those poems.

"Peter Colse" dedicates this poem as follows:

To the virtuous and Chaste Ladie, The Ladie Edith, wife of the right worshipful Sir Rafe Horsey, Knight, increase of all honorable virtues.

Perusing (vertuous Ladie) a Greeke Author, entituled Odyssea (written by Homer prince of Greek poets) noting therein the chaste life of the Ladie Penelope (in the twenty years absence of her loving lord Ulysses) I counterfeited a discourse, in English verses, terming it her complaint: which treatise comming to the view, of certaine of my special friends, I was by them oftentimes encited to publish it. At length weying with my selfe, the shipwrecke that noble vertue chastitie is subject unto; and seeing an unknowne Author, hath of late published a pamphlet called Avisa (overslipping so many praiseworthy matrons) hath registered the meanest: I have presumed unto your Ladyships patronage to commit this my Penelopes Complaint (though imperfectly portraid) to the presse: not doubting but the Etimologie of so rare a subject, enchased with the Physiognomie of your excellent Chastitie: so worthy a conclusion cannot but be a sufficient argument both to abolish Venus Idolaters, and also to countervaile the checkes of Artisans ill willers which carpe at al, but correct nothing at al: measuring other mens

labours, by their owner idle humours. Thus offering unto you Ladiship the firstlings of my scholers crop, for a satisfaction of my presumption, and hoping you wil pardon my boldnes, and accept of this my proffered service, I commit you to the Grace and tuition of the Almightie.

Your Ladiships to command

PETER COLSE.

The style and the matter of this dedication are practically identical with that of Hadrian Dorrell's "Epistle to the Reader" and of his "Apologie." A most casual reading will reveal a single mind and the same intention behind all of them. The name "Peter Colse," like that of "Hadrian Dorrell," is otherwise quite unknown in the annals of Elizabethan letters. It is evidently another of Roydon's pseudonyms.

Appended to "*Penelope's Complaint*" is a short address "To the Reader" in which "Peter Colse," referring to *Willobie his Avisa*, and its author, says:

The cause I have contrived so pithie a matter is so plaine a stile, and short verse, is: for that vaine-glorious Avisa (seeking by slaunder of her superiors, to eternize her folly) is in the like verse, (by an unknowen Authour) described: I follow (I say) the same stile, and verse, as neither misliking the methode, nor the matter, had it beene applyed to some worthier subject.

The words, "by an unknowen Authour" give added evidence, were it needed, that the names "Henry Willobie," and "Hadrian Dorrell" are inventions. Still further proof of this fact is given in the "Apologie" where "Hadrian Dorrell" again refers to "P. C." Pretending to defend the innocency of purpose of *Willobie his Avisa* against "P. C.'s" attack, he says:

But most I marvaile that one P. C. (who seemeth to be a scholler) hath been carried away with this streame of misconceived folly: for I dare pawne my life that there is no particular woman in the world, that was either party or privy to any one sentence or word in that book. This poeticall fiction was penned by the author at least for thirty and five yeares since, (as it will be proved) and lay in waste papers in his study, as many other

pretty things did, of his devising; and so might have continued still, (as his Susanna yet doth) had not I, contrary to his knowledge, with pain collected it; and (in consideration of the good end, to which it was directed) published it.

Further on in the "Apologie" he writes:

He fained, therefore, an individuum, etc. To this fained individuum he gave this fained name Avisa. Which poeticall fiction P. C. calleth a pamphlet. It is folly for a man to despise that which he cannot mend. The Author was unknowen not because hee could not; but because he would not know him: his true name being open in every page,

meaning by this that the "Singular" style and metre of the verse should reveal the authorship. When Roydon's *Elegie, Willobie his Avisa, Penelope's Complaint, The Ballad of Constant Susanna,* and the several other anonymous poems of that period that I attribute to him are critically compared, and the metre, phraseology and sense (or the lack of it) taken into consideration, the force of his words, "his true name being open on every page," will become apparent. It is not likely that more than one such "singular" type of the learned fool would be exhibiting his antics, in so exactly the same manner, and at the same time.

We have several other distinct hints given by Roydon in the "Apologie" with the intention of revealing his identity as the author. In the passage just quoted he refers to other poems by the supposed "Willobie" that lay unpublished among his papers and mentions one in particular, "as his Susanna yet doth." In many places in *Willobie his Avisa,* Roydon refers to the Scriptural Susanna: an anonymous poem entitled, *The Ballad of Constant Susanna,* has been preserved in the Pepys Collection in Magdalen College, Oxford. It is republished for the first time in the appendix to this volume. A very casual comparison of this poem with Roydon's "Elegie," and with the other poems I attribute to him, will show the same "singular" mental, verbal and metrical characteristics already noted. It is evidently the poem referred to by Roydon. Its authorship was, no doubt, well known at the time of its

publication. Its mention by Roydon in the "Apologie" is merely another clew by which those of his friends and readers, not already initiated into the secret, might be made aware of his authorship.

As no copy of the edition of *Willobie his Avisa*, of 1596, is known to be extant, we cannot form a definite judgment as to the manner in which it differed from the edition of 1594. The editions published in later years (copies of which are now extant) differ from the first edition only in a few unimportant details, and in having appended to them the "Apologie," dated 1596. It may be inferred, however, that the edition of 1596, contained matter of a nature more pointedly indicative of the persons caricatured, or of a more libelous character, as the first edition seems to have passed the censor unchallenged.

In that collection of scraps, entitled *The Passionate Pilgrim*, published by William Jaggard in 1599, with Shakespeare's name as author on the title page, I find, what I believe to be, not only a portion of the libelous issue of the 1596 edition of *Willobie his Avisa*, but also the reason for Shakespeare's recorded protest at Jaggard's unwarranted use of his name as the author. Though several contemporary publishers made a dishonest use of Shakespeare's name in their publications, this is the only instance of which we have any recorded protest on the part of our poet. Thomas Hayward, (some of whose poems were used by Jaggard in his edition of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, issued in 1612) in a dedicatory epistle published with his *Apology for Actors*, in that year, protests at Jaggard's publication of his poems, and also records Shakespeare's protest. He writes of Shakespeare, "I know he was much offended with M. Jaggard that (altogether unknown to him) presumed to make so bold with his name." While Hayward's own protest referred to the issue of 1612, his knowledge of Shakespeare's disapproval evidently referred to the earlier issues of Jaggard's collection.

I have good evidence that the early displayed antagonism to Shakespeare, of Roydon and Chapman, exhibited

in their publications of the years 1594–95, shows merely an inceptive stage of what proved to be, practically, a life-long enmity, and that in later years several of the poets and dramatists of the time joined sides in the issue: the University element, among the writers of the day, to a large extent espousing the cause of their fellow-scholars, Roydon and Chapman. It may be shown that, at least for a time, both Ben Jonson and John Florio took sides with Roydon and Chapman in their hostility to Shakespeare, and that Shakespeare, in turn, satirised and caricatured both of these men. This literary warfare reached a particularly heated stage between the years 1598–99, and 1601–02. The troubles of this period, have been noticed by Shakespearean critics in the past, who have supposed that they were merely local, and temporary, and had no basic cause. They refer to the enmity of these writers at this time as the "war of the theatres." I can show strong evidence of the continuance of this hostility, as late as the year 1609, both on Shakespeare's side, and in the works of his hostile contemporaries.

The Passionate Pilgrim, heralding Shakespeare as author, appeared in 1599, at a time when this antagonism had reached an acute phase. We know from Shakespeare's protest, (recorded by Hayward) that his name was used in this publication without his knowledge or consent. The first two poems in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, are two of Shakespeare's Sonnets; not ordinary Sonnets either, but two of the most indicative in the whole series; one of them in fact, the keystone uniting the two series, to the patron and the Dark Lady.

SONNET 138.

When my love swears that she is made of truth,
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:

On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that *I am old*?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told:
Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

SONNET 144.

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell;
Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

In the first of these Sonnets, Shakespeare admits his clandestine love, and refers in a pointed manner to his age; describing himself exactly as Roydon depicts him in the introduction to the 44th Canto of *Willobie his Avisa*, in which the characters "H. W." and "W. S." are introduced into that story.

INTRODUCTION TO CANTO 44.

Henrico Willobego. Italo-Hispalensis. H. W. being sodenly infected with the contagion of a fantasticall fit, at the first sight of A pineth awhile in secret griefe, at length not able any longer to indure the burning heate of so fervent a humour, bewrayeth the secrecy of his disease unto *his familiar friend W. S. who not long before had tryed the curtesie of the like passion*, and was now newly recovered of the like infection; yet finding his friend let bloud in the same veine, he tooke pleasure for a time to see him bleed, and in steed of stopping the issue, he inlargeth the wound, with the sharpe rasor of a willing conceit, perswading him that

hee thought it a matter very easie to be compassed, and no doubt with peaine diligence and some cost in time to bee obtained. Thus this miserable comforter comforting his friend with an impossibilitie, either for that he now would secretly laugh at his friends folly, that had given occasion not long before unto others to laugh at his owne, or because he would see whether another could play his part better than himselfe, and in viewing a far off the course of this loving *Comedy*, hee determined to see whether it would sort to a happier end for this *new actor*, then it did for the *olde player*. But at length this *Comedy* had like to have growne a *Tragedy*, by the weake and feeble estate that H. W. was brought unto, by a desperate view of an impossibility of obtaining his purpose, till Time and Necessity, being his best Physitions brought him a plaster if not to heale, yet in part to ease his malady. In all which discourse is lively represented the unruly rage of unbridled fancy, having the raines to rove at liberty, with the divers and sundry changes of affections and temptations, which Will, set loose from Reason, can devise, etc.

The second Sonnet quoted above gives us a replica of the trio pictured by Roydon in this "Introduction." In the Sonnet we have the writer, his male friend, and the Dark Lady. In the "Introduction" we have "W. S.," "H. W.," and "Avisa." Can it be mere coincidence then when we find nine other verses in *The Passionate Pilgrim*, bearing all the characteristics of Roydon's "singular" muse, but attributed to Shakespeare, and exhibiting him as giving advice to a young man, exactly similar to that put into the mouth of "W. S." by Roydon, both in the introduction to the 44th Canto, and in the verses following it?

The actual history revealed by a proper understanding of the subjective intention of *Venus and Adonis*, and *Lucrece*, and also of the rearranged Sonnets, and the plays of the Sonnet period, which are correlated in spirit with the revelations of the Sonnets, will show Shakespeare in a light, far removed from the cynical misleader of youth depicted by Roydon. While it would appear then that the nine verses in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (written in the same metre, and dealing with the same subject as *Willobie his*

Avisa) are by Roydon, and probably a portion of the condemned issue of 1596, a comparison of those verses with Roydon's acknowledged work, shows, on his part, a very distinct attempt to imitate Shakespeare's simpler and clearer style, with the intention of leading his readers to believe that they were actually written by Shakespeare.

It seems extremely probable, considering its date of issue, that the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim* was instigated by Roydon, Chapman, and their clique. I have already shown that Roydon used a similar device when issuing *Willobie his Avisa* in 1596, by publishing, at the same date, under a different pseudonym, another pamphlet to reinforce, and make the personal point of his satire more strongly indicative. That the third issue of *Willobie his Avisa*, was attempted in 1599 then seems certain. The first edition appeared in 1594, in the same year as Chapman's first attacks upon Shakespeare; the second edition, in 1596, coincident with the publication of *The Ballad of Constant Penelope;* the fourth edition appeared in 1605. The title page of this latter edition reads: "The fourth time corrected and augmented." The third edition then must necessarily have appeared some time after 1596, and some time before 1605. We may well infer then, that its issue was attempted in 1599, to coincide with the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, which so impudently flaunted Shakespeare's name, and that the same influences and intention were behind both publications. It was plainly the edition of 1599, that was condemned at this date and not that of 1596, as is usually stated.

That Matthew Roydon lacked invention is evidenced in his poems, where he again and again reverts to the same plots, figures, and metre. He shows the same lack of versatility in his petty wasp-like annoyance of Shakespeare.

Sir. Sidney Lee informs us in the *Dictionary of National Biography* (where he gives a short sketch of a portion of the life of a Mr. Henry Willoughby of Wiltshire, whom he suggests as the original of the "Henry Willobie" of *Willobie his Avisa*), that Benjamin Furley, Bigford, and other well-

known book collectors, record an edition of *Willobie his Avisa* also in the year 1609. As in the case of the second and third editions, no copy of this fifth edition is now known to exist. We may naturally assume, that the absence of copies of the second edition is due to its suppression by the censor, seeing that we have actual record of its condemnation upon its attempted third issue in 1599. We have no records of the suppression of the later editions mentioned, but, bearing in mind the scantiness of these records, and the perfunctory manner in which they seem to have been kept, it is not unlikely that these later editions met the same fate at the censor's hands.

In a former essay, dealing with George Chapman as the rival poet of the Sonnets, I have shown his attack upon Shakespeare, in a poem entitled *The Tears of Peace*, which was published early in 1609, as an advance advertisement for his forthcoming twelve books of the *Iliad*. I have also shown Shakespeare's answer to this attack, in the revision and publication of *Troilus and Cressida*, with its very significant prefatory address to the reader, in this same year. Now, this also is the year in which Thomas Thorpe issued Shakespeare's Sonnets. It is evident, and admitted by all critical students of the Sonnets, that Shakespeare had no hand in their publication. The persistent hostility of Roydon and Chapman to Shakespeare, has already been indicated, and will be developed fully later on; it shall also be shown that Florio, and Ben Jonson, were, at least for a period, numbered amongst Shakespeare's enemies. Thomas Thorpe, the publisher of the Sonnets, was on terms of intimacy with Jonson, Chapman, and Florio at the period of the publication of the Sonnets in 1609. In 1608 he published Jonson's *Masque of Blackness and Beauty*, and Chapman's *Biron*. That both of these issues were made with the author's sanction is proved by the fact that both publications contain the author's dedications. One year later than the publication of the Sonnets, Thorpe dedicated two of his publications to John Florio. It is evident then that Thomas Thorpe was a friend of the enemy. May not the same

influences that brought about the publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, and of Chapman's dedications in 1594; of *Willobie his Avisa* and *Penelope's Complaint* in 1596; of *Willobie his Avisa* and *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1599, also have instigated the publication of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in 1609, to coincide with the issue of *Willobie his Avisa* in this year, with a similar object in view; more clearly to indicate, and more widely to disseminate, the scandal concerning Shakespeare?

Would this intention not also account for the transposition of the significant initials "H. W." to "W. H." in the dedication?

The attempted issue of 1599, we know was suppressed by the censor; seeing that the Earl of Southampton, as well as Shakespeare, was there satirised, may we not reasonably infer that the suppression was due to the nobleman's, rather than the player's, influence in official quarters?

In making a concerted publication of the Sonnets, and *Willobie his Avisa*, in 1609, as an attack upon Shakespeare, would not the conspirators be likely to take care not to arouse the resentment of Southampton by the use of his initials, thus openly connecting him with the scandal?

The literary merit of *Willobie his Avisa*, would not call it into five editions in fifteen years. Its intended point at Shakespeare, coupled with his growing literary and social prestige, and the persistent malevolence of his jealous literary rivals, fully account for its frequent issue in these years. It is significant that after the death of the persons involved in the story only one edition was issued, until modern research in the last century again suggested the possibility of its connection with Shakespeare's name.

In several collections of songs and poems made by Elizabethan publishers, or musical composers, there are a number of poems in the same "singular" metre as *Willobie his Avisa*, and Roydon's *Elegie*, displaying also such similarity in imagery, diction, and plan, that a common authorship is apparent. A few of these poems are signed by names, otherwise quite unknown in the annals of Elizabethan literature, which are plainly pseudonyms. Several of them have,

in modern collections, been attributed to the composer, editor or publisher under whose auspices the original collections were published. A few of these poems, that I attribute also to Roydon, may be found in Percy's *Reliques* under the following titles: *A Song to the Lute in Musick, My Mind to me a Kingdom is, The Sturdy Rock, The Bride's Burial, Queen Dido,* and *Constant Penelope,* (this is Peter Colse's *Penelope's Complaint*). In addition to these there are several other similar ballads that I have found in other collections, or in old ballad sheets.

The resemblances between *Willobie his Avisa,* and the one long poem that we know positively to be Roydon's, are so very apparent, that his authorship, I believe, will be admitted by all who take the trouble to compare them. The subject of the *Elegie,* should naturally call for profounder thought, and a greater poetic reserve than that of *Willobie his Avisa,* but both poems will be found to display the same glib and tripping volubility, and lack of real seriousness. The author's mental and poetic limitations are shown by the fact that not only the same metre but exactly the same conventional similes and imagery are to be found in the *Elegie* and the satire.

I will quote a few of the more glaring parallels in thought and imagery. In the *Elegie* some of the gods are represented as bestowing certain powers and graces upon Astrophel.

> Then Pallas afterward attyrde
> Our Astrophill with her device,
> Whom in his armor heaven admyrde,
> As of the nation of the skies;
> He sparkled in his arms afarrs,
> As he were dight with fierie starrs.

These favors of Pallas, however, excite the envy of Mars.

> The blaze whereof when Mars beheld
> (An envious eie doth see afar,)
> Such majestie (quoth he) is seeld,
> Such majestie my mart may mar;
> Perhaps this may a suter be
> To set Mars by his deitie.

Mars accordingly proceeds to demolish Astrophel.

> In this surmize he made with speede
> An iron cane, wherein he put
> The thunder that in cloudes do breede;
> The flame and bolt together shut
> With privie force burst out againe,
> And so our Astrophill was slaine.

This entire plan, with practically the same similes and imagery, is reproduced in *Willobie his Avisa;* the sex of the deities being changed to suit that of Avisa, as follows:

> The Graces met with one consent,
> To frame each one in sundrie part,
> Some cunning worke to shew their art.
> First Venus fram'd a luring eye,
> A sweet aspect, and comely grace;
> . . . . . .
>
> Then Pallas gave a reaching head,
> With deepe conceits, and passing wit,
> . . . . . .
> Diana deckt the remnant parts,
> With feature brave that nothing lacke."

As the envy of Mars was excited by the gifts of Pallas to Astrophel, so now, in the case of Avisa, the jealousy of Juno is aroused.

> When Juno viewed her luring grace,
> Olde Juno blusht to see a new,
> She fear'd lest Jove would like this face,
> And so perhaps might play untrue.
> They all admir'd so sweet a sight,
> They all envide so rare a wight.

This goddess, however, is less drastic in her revenge than Mars.

> When Juno came to give her wealth,
> (Which wanting beautie wants her selfe)
> She cryde, this face needes not my pelfe,
> Great riches sow the seeds of strife:
> I doubt not some Olympian power
> Will fill her lap, with golden shower.

This jealous Juno faintly saide,
As halfe misdeeming wanton Jove,
But chaste Diana tooke the maide,
Such new-bred qualmes quite to remove:
O jealous envy, filthy beast,
For envie Juno gave her least.

In the *Elegie* certain birds assemble to mourn the loss of Astrophel, as follows:

The skie-bred Egle, roiall bird,
Percht there upon an oke above;
The Turtle by him never stird,
Example of immortal love.
The swan that sings about to dy,
Leaving meander stood thereby.

And, that which was of woonder most,
The Phœnix left sweet Arabie.

These same birds are introduced in similes in *Willobie his Avisa.*

Though Eagle-eyde this bird appeare,
Not blusht at beames of Phœbus raies:
Though Faulkon wing'd to pearce the ayre,
Whose high-pla'st heart no feare dismayes:
Yet sprang she not from Eagles nest,
But Turtle-bred, loves Turtle best.

. . . . . .

The bird that doth resemble right,
The Turtles faith in constant love,

. . . . . .

This rare-seene bird, this Phœnix sage,
Yeelds matter to my drowsie pen.

I shall now give in parallel columns, a few verbal resemblances and parallels which might not, without some scrutiny, appear to the reader.

ELEGIE

The muses met him ev'ry day
That taught him sing, to write, and say.
. . . . . .

Within these woods of Arcadie
He chiefe delight and pleasure tooke
And on the mountaine Parthenie
Upon the chrystall liquid brooke,
The Muses met him ev'ry day
That taught him sing, to write and say.

O Sunne! (said he) seeing the sunne,
On wretched me why dost thou shine?
My star is falne my comfort done,
Out is the apple of mine eine:
Shine upon those possesse delight,
And let me live in endless night.

O griefe that liest upon my soule,
As heavie as a mount of lead,
The remnant of my life controll,
Consort me quickly with the dead;
Halfe of this hart, this sprite, this will
Di'de in the brest of Astrophill.

And you, compassionate of my wo,
Gentle birds, beasts and shadie trees,
I am assurde ye long to kno
What be the sorrowes one agreev's;
Listen yet then to that insu'th
And heare a tale of teares and ruth.

. . . . . .

Within these woods of Arcadie,
He chiefe delight and pleasure tooke,
And on the mountaine Parthenie,
Upon the chrystall liquid brooke
The Muses met him ev'ry day
That taught him sing, to write and say.

When he descended downe to the mount,
His personage seemed most divine,
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerfull eine;
To heare him speake and sweetly smile,
You were in Paradise the while.

You knew, who knew not Astrophill?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)
Things knowne permit me to renew;
Of him you know his merit such,
I cannot say, you heare, too much.
. . . . . .

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

The Graces met with one consent,
To frame each one in sundrie part,
Some cunning worke to shew their art

Not farre from thence there lies a vale,
A Rosie vale in pleasant plaine,
The nimphes frequent this happy dale,
Olde Helicon revives againe;
Here Muses sing, here Satyres play,
Here mirth resounds both night and day.

Of pleasant dayes the date is gone,
My carcasse pineth in conceit;
The line of life his race hath runne,
Expecting sound of deaths retreat:
Yet would I live to love thee still,
And doe thee good against thy will.

My griefe is greene and ever springs,
My sorrow full of deadly sap,
Sweet death remove these bitter things
Give end to hard and cruel hap:
Yet would I live if I might see,
My life or limnes might pleasure thee.

Farewell that sweete and pleasant walke,
The witnesse of my faith and woe,
That oft hath heard our friendly talke
And gave me leave my griefe to show:
O pleasant path, where I could see,
No crosse at all but onely shee.

. . . . . .

Whilst erst I had my libertie,
To range the woods were fancie list,
The cause of all my miserie,
By heedlesse haste my way I mist:
Untill I found within a plaine,
A Christall Well where Nimphes remaine.

As weary of this wild-goose race,
That led askance, I know not where,
I chose at length a shadow place,
To take the cold and pleasant ayre,
But from the brinke of that same Well,
I saw my Heaven or else my Hell.

O happy wench, who so she be, if any bee,
That thus deserv'd thus to be prais'd by Willobie.
Shall I beleeve? I must beleeve, such one there is
Wel hast thou said, long maist thou say,
such one there is,
If one there be, I can believe there be no more.
. . . . . .

Then Astrophill hath honored thee;
For when thy bodie is extinct,
Thy graces shall eternal be
And live by vertue of his inke;
For by his verses he doth give
To short-livde beautie aye to live.

. . . . . .

My molting hart issude, me thought,
In streames forth at mine eies aright.

. . . . . .

Then down his cheeks the teares so flows,
As doth the streame of many springs.

. . . . . .

The rose and lillie have their prime,
And so hath beauty but a time.

. . . . . .

Upon the branches of those trees,
The airie-winged people sat.

. . . . . .

Gentle birds, beasts and shadie trees.

. . . . . .

The trees, beasts, birds and grove was gone.

. . . . . .

I could the stars that bred that wit,
In force no longer fixed sit!

. . . . . .

And what of wilde or tame are found,
Were coucht in order on the ground.

. . . . . .

No swelling cloude accloid the aire

O griefe that liest upon my soule,
As heavie as a mount of lead.
The remnant of my life controll,
Consort me quickly with the dead;
Halfe of this hart, this sprite, this will,
Di'de in the brest of Astrophill.

And you, compassionate of my wo,
Gentle birds, beasts and shadie trees,
I am assurde ye long to kno
What be the sorrowes me aggreev's;
Listen ye then to that insu'tn.
And heare a tale of teares and ruth.

. . . . . .

Above all others this is hee,
Which erst approved in his song,
That love and honor might agree,
And that pure love will do no wrong.
Sweet saints! it is no sinne nor blame,
To love a man of vertuous name.

. . . . . .

When he descended downe to the mount,
His personage seemed most divine,
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerfull eine;
To heare him speake and sweetly smile,
You were in Paradise the while.

Was never eie did see that face,
Was never eare did heare that tong,
Was never minde did minde his grace,
That ever thought the travell long;
But eies, and eares, and ev'ry thought,
Were with his sweete perfections caught.

Whose praise shal live, when she is dead
with lasting fame.

. . . . . .

A braver Theame more sweetly pend,
was never yet.

. . . . . .

When thinking on my hopelesse hap,
My trickling teares like rivers flow.

. . . . . .

There did the rose and lillie lye,
That bravely deckt a smiling face.

. . . . . .

The Beasts, the Birds and ayrie powers.

. . . . . .

The fixed stars that seldom range.

. . . . . .

That every creatures keepe his course,
His compasse and his place.

. . . . . .

What surly cloud eclipst my blisse:

. . . . . .

My hopelesse clouds, that never cleare.

Now must I find the way to waile while
life doth last,
Yet hope I soone to see the end of
dolefull daies;
When floods of flowring fears, and
creeping cares are past
Then shall I leave to sing, and write
these doleful laies.
For now I loath the food and blood that
lends me breath
I count all pleasures paine that keeps
me from my death.

. . . . . .

Of all the graces that excell
And vertues that are chiefly best,
A constant love doth beare the bell,
And makes his owner ever blest.
How blame you then the faithfull love,
That hath his prayse from God above?

. . . . . .

When first I saw that friendly face,
Though never seene before that day,
That wit, that talke, that sober grace,
In secret heart thus did I say:
God prosper this, for this is she,
That joy or woe must bring to me.

A thousand features I have seene,
For travellers change and choyse shall see,
In France, in Flanders, and in Spaine,
Yet none nor none cold conquer me,
Till now I saw this face of thine,
That makes my wittes are none of mine.

The foregoing argument coupled with these very palpable verbal resemblances, as well as the identity of metre, simile and imagery so apparent in these poems, may already have convinced the discerning reader of the truth of my conclusion, that Matthew Roydon was the author of both poems.

In the next chapter I will give added evidence of Roydon's authorship of *Willobie his Avisa*, and will endeavor to display the fact that Shakespeare was fully cognizant of the identity of his assailant.

CHAPTER VI

Showing Shakespeare's Rejoinders to Roydon's Satire

ASSUMING that the reader agrees with my conclusion, that Roydon was the author of both the *Elegie* and *Willobie his Avisa*, it may naturally be asked, why his authorship of the latter, should make the supposed satire upon Shakespeare any more definite.

In an essay regarding the rival poet of the Sonnets, published some years ago, I believe I proved definitely, the identity of Chapman as that figure, and also, that he and Shakespeare were at enmity for many years. I also demonstrated the fact that Shakespeare satirised Chapman in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Troilus and Cressida*, and outlined Shakespeare's reason for his enmity to Chapman, in the covert attacks which Chapman made upon him in poems published in the years 1594–95. I called attention more particularly to his veiled attacks upon Shakespeare in the dedications to these poems, and also showed how Shakespeare replied to his attacks by parodying passages from Chapman's slurring dedications. It passes coincidence then, when we find that Chapman's dedications were written to the man whom I now show to have been the author of what has long been suspected of being a veiled attack upon our poet, published at the same date as Chapman's poems. Had I attempted to prove Roydon's authorship of *Willobie his Avisa*, by following out clews derived from my findings regarding Chapman as the rival poet, it might be deemed merely an ingenious theory, but when, having dismissed Chapman and his relations to Shakespeare from my mind, I commence research upon what was, apparently, an entirely different subject, viz., the authorship of *Willobie his Avisa*, and, having solved this, it is seen that the thread of argu-

ment in both cases has led to the same point, and that these two invidious critics of our poet are found to have been intimate friends and associates, the evidence presented ceases to be mere ingenuity and approaches the stability of proof. In attacking Shakespeare, in his poems and dedications of 1594–95, Chapman would naturally choose as dedicatee, one who sympathised with his spleen. Roydon evidently worked upon *Willobie his Avisa*, at the same time Chapman composed his poems. The tone of Chapman's dedication of the *Hymns to the Shadow of Night*, and the anti-Shakespearean intention of *Willobie his Avisa*, clearly bespeak collusion between them.

Willobie his Avisa, though not entered on the Stationers' Registers for publication until September, 1594, was evidently written, and held in manuscript, for some months previous to its publication. The incidents regarding Southampton's relations with Avisa that are satirised, undoubtedly took place many months before that date, and the third *book* of Sonnets, in which Shakespeare reflects the same conditions regarding Southampton, if circulated among Southampton's more intimate friends was circulated late in 1593, or early in 1594.

As I have hitherto shown that Shakespeare retaliated upon Chapman, for his attacks at this period, by caricaturing him as Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost*, it now occurs to me that Chapman's friend, Roydon, is caricatured in the same play, as Holofernes' friend, the curate Nathaniel. A brief outline of the few records we possess of Roydon's life, may help to confirm this theory, and account also for Shakespeare's evident dislike of curates of the established church. Wherever a curate is introduced into his plays, the figure is invariably undignified and ridiculous.

The first we know of Matthew Roydon, is, that he graduated as M. A. at Oxford on July 7, 1580. Some time after his graduation, he became well known amongst the university clique of the literary world in London, and seems to have been on intimate terms with many of the prominent writers of the day. The fact that his *Elegie* for Sidney was pub-

lished with Spenser's *Colin Clouts come home againe*, certainly implies an intimacy with Spenser; his *Elegie*, or, as he names it, *Friends Passion for his Astrophel*, proves at least an acquaintance with Sidney.

In 1587, Thomas Nashe in his *Address to the Gentlemen Students of both Universities*, published with Greene's *Arcadia*, mentions Roydon, with some others, as "men living about London who are most able to provide poetry." Further on he says: "Roydon hath shewed himselfe *Singular* in the immortall epitaph of his beloved *Astrophell*, besides many other *absolute comike inventions*, (made more publicke by every man's praise than they can be by my speech)." In what manner has Roydon shown himself *Singular* if not in his metre, alliteration, phraseology, and the stupidly classical figures and imagery, he uses alike in all his poems no matter what their nature? He takes a portion of the apocrypha, as in his *Susanna*, and paraphrases it into his jingling pentameters. He does exactly the same with fragments of Homer, as in *Penelope's Complaint*, and *Queen Dido*, and even when he attempts to grow serious and compose an elegie he follows the same methods.

In 1598 Meres gave Roydon high praise as a poet, and described him as "worthy of comparison with the great poets of Italy."

In 1594, Chapman addresses him as "my dear and most worthy friend Master Matthew Roydon," and in 1595, again as, "the truly learned and my worthy friend," and in dedicating to him the poems of this year, writes of him as "Sweet Matthew."

In 1611, John Davies of Hereford compliments Roydon, in some verses appended to his *Scourge of Folly*.

In 1609 Robert Arnim, praises him as "a poetical light . . . *which shines not in the world as it is wisht, but yet the worth of its lustre is known.*" This allusion of Arnim's seems to be directed at Roydon's affectation of anonymity and use of pseudonyms in publication.

Towards the end of his life, he seems to have fallen into poverty, as we find in Allyn's *Memoirs* two entries of money

advanced to him by that old philanthropist. The first entry is in 1618, and reads: "given to Mr. Roydon, eightpence." The next entry is in 1622, and shows that it is the Roydon of our sketch as it reads: "To Mr. Matthew Roydon, sixpence."

In 1603, Roydon became fourth minor canon of St. Paul's Cathedral, and there is record that he was still holding this office in 1621. The writer of the sketch of Roydon's life, in the *Encyclopedia of National Biography*, doubts that this is the same Roydon to whom Chapman dedicated his poems, but gives no reason for his doubts; we assume, however, they arise from the fact that Roydon, with Marlowe, and some others, was criticised over thirty years previous to this date, for his freedom of thought in religious matters. It is extremely improbable that there were two Matthew Roydons prominent in the literary life of London at that period, and evident that the Matthew of our sketch was a clergyman of the established church. There is record that he was attached for some time to Earl Fitzwalter's establishment. In what capacity other than as a tutor or private chaplain could he have been retained? At a later period Roydon seems to have entered the service of Robert Radcliffe, fifth Earl of Sussex, in a similar capacity.

Many scriptural references and similes in *Willobie his Avisa*, are of such an obscure and far-fetched nature, as to suggest that they were not made by a layman.

We have no record of Roydon's death.

It is somewhat strange, considering the praise which such men as Davies, Nashe, Meres, and others bestowed upon Roydon as a poet, that we should now have only one long poem, which we have known to be his, and it is evident, that even this would have been lost and forgotten, had it not been published with Spenser's poems. There are also two small verses known to be by Roydon; one appended to Watson's *Sonnets* published in 1581, and one to Sir George Peckham's *True Reporte* in 1583. What then has become of the other poems, that gave him such reputation in his own day? Where are now his "absolute comike inventions?"

The fact that *Willobie his Avisa*, was published without the author's name, would not alone prove that anonymity was intended; there are many well-known instances from Elizabethan days, of poems and plays being published without the author's names. The libelous and satirical nature of this poem, deterred Roydon from using his name in the publication. It is evident, however, that Roydon's "Singular" style was readily recognised at that time, and that he intended that his authorship should be known, at least by his friends. We have already noticed the passage in the *Apologie*, wherein, writing of "P. C." whom he represents as having criticised the intention of the poem; he says: "The Author was unknown, not because he could not, but because he would not know him; his name being open on every page": thus calling attention to the metrical and characteristic resemblances between *Willobie his Avisa* and his known publications.

In the introductory Epistle to the Reader, we have, what I believe is intended to be, a still more palpable hint as to Roydon's identity as the author. His *Elegie*, in the same peculiar metre as *Willobie his Avisa*, is an elegy for his friend Astrophel or Sidney; it was published first in 1593. No other poem of that period in this metre, is to be found with the exception of the verses in *The Passionate Pilgrim* already noted, and the several anonymous poems, which, in the light of their anonymity and their technical and characteristic resemblances to *Willobie his Avisa*, and the *Elegie*, we may also impute to Roydon. Hadrian Dorrell, the supposed editor of *Willobie his Avisa*, discussing that poem says: "For the composition and order of the verse, although he flie not aloft with the wings of Astrophel, nor dare to compare with the Arcadian sheepheard, or in any way match with the dainty Faiery Queene." Here, we have reference to two of Roydon's well-known friends, Sidney and Spenser, and in the case of Sidney, a double reference: "although he flie not aloft with the wings of Astrophel, nor dare to compare with the Arcadian sheepheard," may not the reference to "Astrophel" be, to Roydon's former poem,

An Elegie, or Friends Passion for his Astrophel, seeing that the next sentence and the words *Arcadian Sheepheard*, distinctly refer to Sidney in person? There can be little doubt, that Roydon, in the passage quoted above, intended to give his friends a clew to his identity as the author of *Willobie his Avisa;* he indicates his well-known poem *An Elegie, or Friends Passion for his Astrophel;* he refers to Sidney, (upon whose death the poem was written), as the *Arcadian sheepheard*, and indicates Spenser, with whose poems his *Elegie* had recently been published, by his reference to the *dainty Faiery Queene*. The use of this peculiar, jingling, ballad-like metre, for an elegy, was noticed as "Singular," some years before, by Nashe. It is to be presumed, also, that several of Roydon's other ballads in this metre, were extant in ballad sheets at this date.

In *Shakespeare and the Rival Poet*, I have, I believe, given fairly conclusive evidence, that Shakespeare has caricatured Chapman as Holofernes, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and has also parodied several passages from Chapman's dedications and poems in that play. I shall now advance evidence for my belief, that he has caricatured Roydon as the curate Nathaniel in the same play.

In using the name Nathaniel, Shakespeare evidently did so with indicative intention; it is practically the same name as Matthew, being the Grecianised equivalent of the older form: the Hebrew derivation and meaning of both names being the same. As, in my argument concerning the enmity between Shakespeare and Chapman, I displayed both Chapman's attacks and Shakespeare's answers, I shall now present one very palpable instance, in which he retorts upon Roydon, by parodying his literary style in the utterances of this character.

In Act IV. Sc. 2. in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Holofernes invites Nathaniel to dine with him, at the house of the father of one of his pupils, and promises to discourse upon the quality of Biron's verses to Rosaline, which Nathaniel has just read aloud.

Hol. I do dine today at the father's of a certain pupil of mine; where, if, before repast, it shall please you to gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege I have with the parents of the aforesaid child or pupil, undertake your ben venuto; when I will prove those verses to be very unlearned, neither savouring of poetry, wit, nor invention: I beseech your society.

Nath. And thank you too; for society saith the text, is the happiness of life.

Hol. And, certes, the text most infallibly concludes it.

Here the scene ends. Holofernes and Nathaniel are next introduced in Act V. Sc. 1. The dinner is over, and Holofernes has evidently expatiated upon the weakness of Biron's poetical performance.

Hol. Satis quod sufficit.

Nath. I praise God for you sir: your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy.

When the ending of Act IV. Sc. 2. and the beginning of Act V. Sc. 1. as quoted, are compared with the following passage from Roydon's "Epistle to the Reader," prefixed to *Willobie his Avisa*, the parody becomes apparent. In the scenes from *Love's Labour's Lost*, that are quoted, Holofernes undertakes to criticise the poetry, wit, and invention of certain verses. In Roydon's "Epistle," the fictitious Hadrian Dorrell also discusses the manner of the "composition, disposition, invention and order of the verse." For the better guidance of the reader I shall quote in parallel columns both "Dorrell's" critique and Shakespeare's parody.

ROYDON	NATHANIEL IN LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST
Yet shall you find his words and phrases neither triviall nor absurd; but all the whole worke, for the verse pleasant, without hardnesse, smooth without any roughness, sweete without tediousnesse, easie to be understood, without harsh absurditie: yeelding a gracious harmony everywhere to the delight of the reader.	Your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious, pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange without heresy.

The parody of the quotation from Dorrell's "Epistle to the Reader," displayed in the passage from *Love's Labour's Lost*, is so bold and open, that comment is unnecessary.

If Acts IV. and V. be read critically, it will be seen that the part of the play, introducing Biron's verses and Holofernes' criticisms thereon, have no real bearing upon the general plot or action of the play, and have been introduced, merely as parody of, and satire upon, these two scholastic prigs.

Before proceeding with the present argument, it may be instructive to notice, in the parallel just quoted, Shakespeare's superiority over these supercilious scholars (Roydon and Chapman), in the choice and use of words. Here he is frolicking with his subject, in exuberant spirits, and without any serious resentment, making mild fun of his detractors, who have dubbed him "artizan," "Venus Idolator," "ignorant," "peasant," "unshorn Cato," "Judgments butcher," etc., but, even when playing with his subject, he shows his superiority. Take Roydon's antithesis, "pleasant without hardness," and compare it with Shakespeare's, "pleasant without scurrility;" Roydon's stupid and tautological, "smooth without any roughness," with Shakespeare's, "witty without affection;" Roydon's, "sweet without tediousness," with Shakespeare's, "audàcious without impudency, learned without opinion, strange without heresy," and what a difference in the real meaning and proper use of words is exhibited: in Roydon's case, we have mere tautological verbosity, and in Shakespeare's, clear and forceful antithesis.

I have found much evidence, that Shakespeare's antagonism to these two men, and the clique they represented, is reflected to some extent in certain other of his plays. I do not wish to involve the present argument by going very fully into the matter here, though a few reflections of this antagonism, are so interesting in the present connection, that I cannot refrain from touching upon them.

As I have previously stated, the only extant literary remains, that we have hitherto known to be Roydon's, are his *Elegie, or Friends Passion for his Astrophel*, and the two small verses attached to Watson's *Sonnets*, and Sir George

Peckham's *True Reporte.* We are assured, however, by the numerous flattering contemporary references to him and his work, that he wielded a fairly prolific pen. Whether he ever essayed dramatic composition, is not at present known, but I am strongly of the opinion that he did, and that it was to him that his friend Spenser referred in 1591, in the following lines from the *Teares of the Muses:*

> But that some gentle Spirit, from whose pen
> Large streames of honnie and sweete Nectar flowe,
> Scorning the boldnes of such base-borne men,
> Which dare their follies forth so rashly throwe,
> Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
> Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.

at a period, when Roydon had temporarily forsaken literature, to prepare for holy orders; which we know he afterwards entered.

In 1587, as has hitherto been noticed, Nashe writes of Roydon's "absolute comike inventions made more public by every mans praise, than they can be by my speech."

Spenser's description of the "gentle spirit, from whose pen large streames of honnie and sweete Nectar flowe;" as sitting "in idle cell" aptly describes the divinity student, and erstwhile *littérateur.* These verses were for many years held to be a reference to Shakespeare, but this view is now repudiated by all Shakespearean critics. It was never more than a far-fetched and baseless supposition in this connection.

In *Midsummer Night's Dream,* in the play of "Pyramus and Thisbe," performed by Bottom and his "rude mechanicals," there is evident parody and satire. I am convinced, that this is directed against Matthew Roydon, and am consequently inclined to the opinion, that Roydon at some time produced a play, or poem, upon this subject.

Many Elizabethan poets display a marked tendency to alliteration. In Spenser it is noticeable, and Chapman frequently indulges in it, but in the few extant remains that we possess of Roydon's pen, this characteristic assumes ridiculous proportions. In the following lines from *Mid-*

summer Night's Dream, Act V., this fault of Roydon's is evidently parodied.

Pyramus. Sweet moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams:
I thank thee, moon, for shining now so bright
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to taste of truest Thisbe's sight.
But stay; — O Spite!
But mark — Poor Knight,
What dreadful dole is here?
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be?
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stain'd with blood?
Approach, ye furies fell!
O fates! come, come;
Cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

That the nonsense of these verses, with the moon's "sunny beams," and their extravagant alliteration, was intended as a travesty of Roydon's mind and style, we have good proof in the lines that immediately follow, when, Pyramus having ended his woeful rant, Duke Theseus remarks, "This *passion*, and the *death* of a dear *friend*, would go near to make a man look sad." When the forced and stilted classicism, the opera-bouffe metre, and, above all, the extravagant and jingling alliteration of Roydon's *Elegie* for Sidney are noted, and compared with the sombre intention of the poem, and its heavy and woeful title, *Elegie*, or *Friend's Passion for his Astrophel*, written upon the *death* of the Right Honourable Sir Philip Sidney; the humor and intention of Shakespeare's parody in these lines, and in Theseus' reflection, becomes clear.

In Mr. Gollancz' introduction to the Temple edition of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, I learn that a commonplace book, belonging to the British Museum, (additional MSS. 15227) contains a short play entitled, *Tragœdia miserrima Pyrami et Thisbes Fata enuncians* (*Historia ex Publio Ovidio depromta*) *Authore N. R.* May not this be Roydon's play?

I have shown that Shakespeare caricatures Roydon in *Love's Labour's Lost*, as the curate, Nathaniel; seeing that "N. R." has latinised the title of this play, may he not also have intended the "N," to stand for Nathaniel, the more classic form of Matthew?

I have not had an opportunity to examine this MS. of *Pyramus and Thisbe* by N. R.; but will venture a suggestion, that the ranting nonsense of the "rude mechanicals" in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, upon comparison may reveal a resemblance and evidence of parody.

In Clement Robinson's *Handful of Pleasant Delights*, (1584) there is a poem entitled, "A new sonnet of Pyramus and Thisbie" which bears a very remarkable resemblance to many of Roydon's verses, and also strongly suggests Shakespeare's parody. This poem is subscribed, "I. Tomson:" as I find no other poem of that age, with this signature, and no record of any contemporary poet of that name; it is evident that "I. Tomson" was used by Roydon as a *nom de plume*, and that this poem is another of his lost "absolute comike inventions." That Roydon indulged in the use of pseudonyms, we have evidence, in the "Hadrian Dorrell" of *Willobie his Avisa* and also in "Peter Colse."

Among the anonymous Elizabethan poems which, from idiom, construction, metre and sense, I have assigned to Roydon, there is another that I am inclined to believe, is glanced at, and made fun of, with indicative intention, by Shakespeare in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Under the ascription of "Ignoto," we have a stray which opens as follows:

THE SHEPHERD'S DREAM

In peascod time, when hound to horn
  Gives ear, till buck be killed;
And little lads, with pipes of corn,
  Sat keeping beasts afield;
I went to gather strawberries tho,
  By woods and grooves full fair;
And parched my face with Phœbus so,
  In walking in the air,

That down I laid me, by a stream,
With boughs all overclad;
And there I met the strangest dream
That ever Shepherd had.

Methought, I saw each Christmas Game,
Each Revel all and some,
And everything that I can name,
Or may in fancy come.
The substance of the sights I saw,
In silence pass they shall;
Because I lack the skill to draw
The order of them all.

Midsummer Night's Dream, Act IV. ends with Bottom's monologue:

Bot. (*awaking*). When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer: my next is, "Most fair Pyramus." Heigh-ho! Peter Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout the tinker! Starveling! Gad's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep! *I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream past the wit of man to say what dream it was: man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was,— and methought I had,—* but man is but a patched fool, if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. *I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream:* it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke; peradventure, to make it more gracious, *I will sing it at her death.*

This is also a distinct stroke at Roydon's *Elegie*. The jingling and inappropriate metre of this seriously intended poem is exactly similar to that used by Roydon in nearly all his ballads. Many verses of Roydon's *Elegie* are given to the description of a dream, or vision, that verily "hath no bottom." Bottom's promise, to get Peter Quince (which name, by the way, seems strangely reminiscent of Roydon's "Peter Colse" and his ballad), to write a ballad of his dream, and "peradventure to make it more gracious" to "sing it at her death," points obviously at Roydon's ballad-elegy.

"Ignoto" was a pseudonym used by many Elizabethan poets who wished to remain anonymous; poems by Lord Brooke, Raleigh, Barnfield and others have been recognised under this ascription. The poem quoted above, bears all the earmarks of Roydon's style, and, when compared with the *Elegie*, again displays the same poverty of poetic invention, that we have shown by comparing the *Elegie* with *Willobie his Avisa.* The eighth verse of the *Elegie*, begins a description of a dream or vision, which is continued to the second from the last verse. Having indicated Roydon, as shown in the parallel between Bottom's monologue and *The Shepherd's Dream*, Shakespeare accentuates the indication by expectancy. "I will get Peter Quince" says Bottom, "to write a ballad of this dream: it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom, and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the Duke; peradventure, to make it more gracious, I will sing it at her death."

In Act V. Sc. 1. Bottom, as Pyramus, recites the promised ballad upon the supposed death of Thisbe, keeping the promise he had made, "peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I will sing it at her death,"

> Pyr. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams;
> I thank thee Moon, for shining now so bright;
> For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
> I trust to take of truest Thisbe sight.

This may be seen, to be an evident parody of a verse from Roydon's vision in the *Elegie.*

> O Sunne! (said he) seeing the sunne,
> On wretched me why dost thou shine?
> My star is falne, my comfort done,
> Out is the apple of mine eine:
> Shine upon those possesse delight,
> And let me live in endless night.

Still further to strengthen his indication, and drive home his point, Theseus is made to refer to the lugubrious title of Roydon's *Elegie* or, *Friends Passion for his Astrophel,*

written upon the *death* of the Right Honourable Sir Philip Sidney, in the passage, heretofore quoted:

> The. This *passion*, and the *death* of a dear *friend*,
> Would go near to make a man look sad.

We may well infer, that if Shakespeare intended to make fun of Roydon and his verses, through the mouth of Bottom, he would also have caricatured Roydon's description of the actions of the man in his vision, by the acting of Bottom on awaking from his dream.

> Bot. This green plot shall be our stage.

Roydon's vision in the *Elegie* commences:

> In midst and center of *this plot*,
> I saw one groveling on the grasse;
> A man or stone, I knew not that:
> No stone; of man the figure was,
> And yet I could not count him one,
> More than the image made of stone.
>
> At length I might perceive him reare
> His bodie on his elbow end:
> Earthly and pale with ghastly cheare,
> Upon his knees he upward tend,
> Seeming like one in uncouth stound,
> To be ascending out the ground.
>
> A grievous sigh forthwith he throwes,
> As might have torne the vitall strings;
> Then down his cheeks the teares so flows,
> As doth the streame of many springs.
> So thunder rends the cloud in twaine,
> And makes a passage for the raine.
>
> Incontinent, with trembling sound;
> He woefully gan to complaine;
> Such were the accents as might wound,
> And teare a diamond rocke in twaine:
> After his throbs did somewhat stay,
> Thus heavily he gan to say:

O Sunne! (said he) seeing the sunne,
On wretched me why dost thou shine?
My star is falne, my comfort done,
Out is the apple of mine eine:
Shine upon those possesse delight,
And let me live in endlesse night.

As Bottom's "methought I had," and "methought I was," as well as his dream that "hath no bottom," parody the Shepherd's dream, so in all probability, his actions on awakening, rising on his elbow with "grievous sighs" and woeful complainings, caricatured this description of Roydon's vision from the *Elegie*.

Now here are three poems indicated and parodied, the *Elegie* or *Friend's Passion for his Astrophel* (which we know to be by Roydon), the poem of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, which is signed "I. Thomson" and *The Shepherd's Dream*, which is signed "Ignoto." All of these poems are reprinted in this volume, and may be compared critically with each other, and with *Willobie his Avisa*, and also with the *Ballad of Constant Susanna*, and several other poems of similar characteristics, and of that period, that I attribute to Roydon's pen. "I. Thomson," like "Peter Colse," and "Hadrian Dorrell" are otherwise quite unknown in Shakespearean literature. The ascription "Ignoto" is a plain admission of anonymous intention. All of these poems here caricatured bear the same technical and characteristic resemblances to Roydon's *Elegie* already displayed in parallel columns between the *Elegie* and *Willobie his Avisa*.

In the light of all this and of Shakespeare's indicative reference to "this passion and the death of a dear friend," it becomes evident that Roydon was the author of all the poems indicated, and the object of Shakespeare's satirical shafts.

CHAPTER VII

Correlating the Revelations of the Sonnets with Willobie His Avisa

ASSUMING the authorship and satirical intention of *Willobie his Avisa* now to be settled, and, allowing for metaphor and poetic license, we may infer, that in that poem real people are caricatured, and actual events and localities indicated and described.

I shall now endeavor to analyse the personality of Avisa, and the circumstances and conditions of her life as suggested by Roydon, and examine in what manner the story he tells of her relations with "Henry Willobie," and "W. S.," reflects, or coincides with, the story of the particular groups of Sonnets, the composition of which I assign to about the same period as the writing of this poem. I shall then compare my findings and conclusions with incidents of Southampton's and Shakespeare's lives at the same date, and shall finally consider the developed history in the light of other coincident biographical data, and rumour, derived from sources independent of, and totally dissociated from, the argument now in hand.

Avisa's birthplace and early home is indicated by Roydon as being situated somewhere in the west of England.

> At westerne side of Albions Ile,
> Where Austine pitcht his Monkish tent.

This probably points to some locality on the borders of Wales, where St. Augustine, the first Romish Primate of England, is supposed to have encamped when on his mission to induce the Welsh Christian priests to submit to the usages and rule of the Roman church: possibly the village of Aust, on the Severn, in Gloucestershire, is indicated.

Further descriptive particulars of her early home, and also of her social condition, are given in the following verses:

> Not farre from thence there lies a vale,
> A Rosie vale in pleasant plaine;
> The Nimphes frequent this happy dale,
> Olde Helicon revives againe;
> Here Muses sing, here Satyres play,
> Here mirth resounds both night and day.
>
> At East of this a Castle stands,
> By ancient Shepheards built of old,
> And lately was in Shepheards hands;
> Though now by brothers bought and solde,
> At West side springs a Cristall well,
> There doth this Chaste Avisa dwell.
>
> And there she dwels in publique eye,
> Shut up from none that list to see;
> She answeres all that list to trie,
> Both high and low of each degree:
> But few that come, but feele her dart,
> And trie her well ere they depart.
>
> Along this plaine there lies a downe,
> Where Shepheards feede their frisking flocke;
> Her Sire the Mayor of the towne,
> A lovely shout of ancient stocke,
> Full twenty yeares she lived a maide,
> And never was by man betraide.

When the present history is developed and accepted these descriptions may possibly lead to the identification of the locality indicated.

It is evident that her father was an innkeeper from the following verse:

> And there she dwels in publique eye,
> Shut up from none that list to see;
> She answeres all that list to trie,
> Both high and low of each degree:
> But few that come, but feele her dart,
> And trie her well ere they depart.

We have further evidence of this from the following lines of one of the poems appended to *Willobie his Avisa*, entitled "*The Victorie of English Chastitie, under the Fained Name of Avisa.*"

> Avisa, both by Syre and spouse,
> Was linckt to men of meanest trade.

We have still further assurance of this fact in the 46th Canto of *Willobie his Avisa*, which contains only the following verse.

> Seest yonder house, where hangs the badge
> Of Englands Saint, when Captaines cry
> Victorious land, to conquering rage,
> Loe, there my hopelesse helpe doth ly:
> And there that friendly foe doth dwell,
> That makes my heart thus rage and swell.

With Avisa's social condition in mind the sign "Of Englands Saint," can scarcely have been armorial, and was, no doubt, the sign of an inn, "The George," or "The St. George." Her connection with an inn after her marriage is shown in the verse just quoted, and is still further displayed in the 22d Canto where the suitor, called "Caveleiro," having been repulsed in the following verses:

AVISA.

> I told you first what you should find,
> Although you thought I did but jest,
> And selfe affection made you blind,
> To seeke the thing I most detest:
> Besides his host, who takes the paine
> To reckon first, must count againe.
>
> Your rash sworne oath you must repent,
> You must beware of headlong vowes:
> Excepting him whom free content,
> By wedlocke words hath made me spouse;
> From others yet I am as free,
> As they this night that boren be.

answers her:

CAVELEIRO.

Well give me then a cup of wine,
As thou art his, would thou wert mine.

Where, but at an inn would this informal request for wine be made? In a verse from the 13th Canto, Avisa's vocation is again suggested.

Mine eares have heard your taunting words;
Of yeelding fooles by you betraid,
Amongst your mates at open boords,
Knowst such a wife? knowst such a maid?
Then must you laugh then must you winke
And leave the rest for them to thinke.

Here we have displayed the tavern hostess' knowledge of the lascivious gossip of roysterers in their cups.

Though an innkeeper, Avisa's father was mayor of his town.

Along this plaine there lies a downe,
Where Shepheards feede their frisking flocke;
Her Sire the Mayor of the towne,
A lovely shout of ancient stocke,
Full twenty years she lived a maide,
And never was by man betraide.

It may appear that her husband, though also an innkeeper, in time attained to this office in another and a larger town.

At about the age of twenty Avisa married.

Full twenty years she lived a maide,
And never was by man betraide.

At length by Juno's great request,
Diana loth, yet gave her leave,
Of flowring yeares to spend the rest
In wed-locke band, but yet receive,
Quoth she, this gift; Thou virgin pure,
Chast wife in wed-locke shalt endure.

She now removed from her father's home and locality to a larger town, where she is still connected with an inn, now, however, in the capacity of hostess.

When flying fame began to tell,
How beauties wonder was return'd,
From Countrie hils, in Townes to dwell,
With speciall gifts and grace adorn'd,
Of Suters store there might you see;
And some were men, of high degree.

From Roydon's descriptions Avisa must have been an uncommonly handsome and attractive woman, of more than ordinary wit and personal charm. It is very apparent that he had some particular woman in mind, and that he endeavored to reproduce her ready wit and sprightliness in the picture he gives us of Avisa. The following passage from the "Epistle to the Reader," plainly suggests this, and was evidently intended by Roydon to indicate his original.

Againe, if we marke the exact description of her birth, her country, the place of her abode, and such other circumstances, but especially the matter and manner of their talkes and conferences, mee thinkes it is a matter almost impossible that any man could invent all this without some ground or foundation to build on.

This inforceth me to conjecture, that though the matter be handled poetically, yet there is something under these fayned names and showes, that have been done truely. Now judge you, for I can give no sentence in that I know not, if there be any such constant Wife (as I doubt not but there may be), I wish that there were more would spring from her ashes, and that all were such. Whether my author knew, or heard of any such I cannot tell, but of mine owne knowledge, I dare to sweare that I know one A. D. that either hath or would, if occasion were so offered, indure these and many greater temptations with a constant mind and setled heart.

Though Roydon depicts in Avisa what he pretends to consider a paragon of virtue, the great number and varying social quality of her admirers, coupled with the extremely broad tone of their conversations, makes it difficult to reconcile his pretended ideal with the actual woman he presents. Avisa certainly used her seductive eyes and ready wit with somewhat more freedom than is consistent with the pious and severely chaste being he pretends to celebrate. When

we remember the important functions in the social economy performed by an innkeeper, and the position occupied by a first class inn in Elizabethan days, supplying as it did the place and needs now filled by the hotel, the tavern, the club, news office, and travellers' booking office and terminus combined, we can readily conceive that a woman who had lived since her childhood in such an environment, must necessarily have absorbed some share of the tone and manners of her social superiors with whom she came in contact, as well as some taint from the laxity and freedom inseparable from such a public life. The sprightly mentality of Avisa, and of the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, as well as the musical accomplishments of the latter, are then, not at all incompatible with the vocation of their original.

So far as our present knowledge goes, much of the poem of *Willobie his Avisa*, has to do with characters in no way affecting the present story, or the satire upon Shakespeare and his friend, Southampton. The portion of the poem more directly connected with our investigations begins with the 44th Canto, which is prefaced as follows:

Henrico Willobego, Italo-Hispalensis. H. W. being sodenly infected with the contagion of a fantasticall fit, at the first sight of A. pineth awhile in secret griefe, at length not able any longer to indure the burning heate of so fervent a humour, bewrayeth the secrecy of his disease unto his familiar friend W. S. who not long before had tryed the curtesie of the like passion, and was now newly recovered of the like infection; yet finding his friend let bloud in the same veine, he tooke pleasure for a time to see him bleed, and in steed of stopping the issue, he inlargeth the wound, with the sharpe razor of a willing conceit, perswading him that hee thought it a matter very easie to be compassed, and no doubt with paine diligence and some cost in time to bee obtained. Thus this miserable comforter comforting his friend with an impossibilitie, either for that he now would secretly laugh at his friends folly, that had given occasion not long before unto others to laugh at his owne, or because he would see whether another could play his part better then himselfe, and in viewing a far off the course of this loving Comedy, hee determined to see whether it would sort to a happier end for this

new actor, then it did for the olde player. But at length this Comedy had like to have growne a Tragedy, by the weake and feeble estate that H. W. was brought unto, by a desperate view of an impossibility of obtaining his purpose, till Time and Necessity, being his best Physitions brought him a plaster if not to heale, yet in part to ease his malady. In all which discourse is lively represented the unruly rage of unbridled fancy, having the raines to rove at liberty, with the divers and sundry changes of affections and temptations, which Will, let loose from Reason, can devise, etc.

The idea that this poem satirised Shakespeare and Southampton, originated, as has hitherto been mentioned, in the suggestion of the identity of the initials "H. W." and "W. S." with the initials of Shakespeare's and Southampton's names, and the supposition that the words, "Comedy," "Tragedy," "new actor" and "olde player," were used with indicative intention as pointing at Shakespeare. It is possible there may have been some point in referring to Southampton as "Italia-Hispalensis;" if there was the point intended is not now very clear.

Southampton is reported by John Florio as being "as proficient in Italian as teaching or learning can make him." In the preface to his *Worlde of Wordes*, published in 1598, Florio addresses Southampton as follows: "To your bounteous Lordship most noble, most virtuous, and most Honourable Earl of Southampton, in whose paie and patronage I have lived some yeeres." While it is not clear at what period Southampton first took up the study of Italian, under the tutorage of Florio, we know, from the preface quoted, that in 1598, Florio had been "some yeeres" in Southampton's pay. I shall later advance presumptive evidence showing that Florio first became connected with Southampton shortly after his coming to Court, in October, 1590, and that Southampton probably was studying Italian with Florio at the date of the Cowdray progress in the autumn of 1591. I shall also shew the likelihood that Florio accompanied Southampton, in the capacity of guide or tutor, on his first visit to the Continent shortly after this event. At whatever

date Southampton left England for his first Continental visit, we have proof in a letter, written by him to the Earl of Essex, on March 2, 1592 (new style), that he was in France at that time.

On March 6th, in the same year, we have a letter in the State Papers, from Roger Manners to Lord Burghley, informing him that he had been at Northall where he had interviewed the Countess of Warwick in relation to a proposed match between Elizabeth Vere (Southampton's fiancée), and the young Earl of Bedford. From this we may judge that at this time doubts had arisen in Burghley's mind regarding Southampton's desire for the fulfilment of the match and that he was then casting about for another suitable alliance for his granddaughter, in the event of a rupture with Southampton. That this engagement was not yet disrupted, and that Burghley had its consummation in view as late as May, 1593, is suggested in the fact of Southampton's proposed nomination as Knight of the Garter at that date. We have no dates to guide us regarding Southampton between March 2, 1592, when we know he was in France, and September, 1592, in which month he accompanied the Queen and Court to Oxford. It is quite probable that he spent the bulk of his summer on the Continent, and that Florio accompanied him upon this occasion. Such a tour had, at that period, already commenced to be looked upon as a requisite corollary to a young nobleman's education. In the 49th Canto of *Willobie his Avisa*, which is headed "H. Will. the first assault," we have the following verse:

> A thousand features I have seene,
> For travellers change and choyse shall see,
> In France, in Flanders, and in Spaine,
> Yet none nor none cold conquer me,
> Till now I saw this face of thine,
> That makes my wittes are none of mine,

which is possibly intended by Roydon to indicate such a tour. It will be noticed that in the earlier parts of the poem of *Willobie his Avisa*, the marginal notes are in English or in Latin, but that in the bulk of the portions of the poem

referring to Henry Willobie's assault upon Avisa they are in Italian, when not in English, and that every Canto in which Henry Willobie is represented as either writing or speaking, is ended with an Italian sentence. This may have been intended by Roydon to indicate Southampton's known proficiency in that tongue.

"W. S." is introduced in the 45th Canto, where he is made to address Willobie as "friend Harry;" he inquires the cause of his woe-begone appearance and is answered by Willobie, in Canto 46, which contains but a single verse.

H. W.

Seest yonder house, where hangs the badge
Of Englands Saint, when Captaines cry
Victorious land, to conquering rage,
Loe, there my hopelesse helpe doth ly:
And there that friendly foe doth dwell,
That makes my heart thus rage and swell.

The remainder of the Cantos describing the dialogue and conferences between Willobie and Avisa, contain little that is indicative, and closely resemble in argument and manner, the earlier cantos wherein Avisa parries the attacks of other suitors.

In the copy of the poem I use (the edition of 1635), the word "finis" occurs at the end of this Canto. Roydon has confined himself to his usual "singular" metre in all of the preceding cantos, but in the 59th he displays his character, Willobie, as inditing verses in person and, I believe, intentionally changes his metre and involves his feet to satirise Southampton's own attempts at verse. We have no proof that Southampton wrote any verses to the Dark Lady, but included in the group of Shakespeare's Sonnets to her, which I have hitherto suggested are the meagre remains of what was originally a numerous body of Sonnets, we find one Sonnet that is very plainly the production of a very much less able pen than Shakespeare's. The 145th Sonnet, if indeed these rhymes may be dignified by that title, reads as follows:

Those lips that Love's own hand did make,
Breathed forth the sound that said, 'I hate,'
To me that languished for her sake:
But when she saw my woful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue, that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom;
And taught it thus anew to greet:
'I hate,' she altered with an end,
That followed it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who, like a fiend,
From heaven to hell is flown away.
'I hate,' from hate away she threw,
And saved my life, saying — 'Not you.' "

It is clear that these verses are not Shakespeare's; even in parody he cannot depress his muse quite to this level. It occurs to me, in this connection, that the procurer of these Sonnets for publication, whoever he was, undoubtedly collected them from their original recipients; those received by Southampton had remained almost intact, while those written to the tavernkeeper's wife were lost and scattered; the few that remain being preserved, possibly, more by chance than intention. It is possible then that these verses are a vestige of Southampton's poetical efforts which was preserved by chance with those of Shakespeare's, and collected with them, from the innkeeper's wife.

In the portions of this satire of Roydon's which refer to "Henry Willobie," "W. S.," and "Avisa," we have the story of the third group of Sonnets practically reproduced, but told from the standpoint of a critical and prejudiced observer. In the Sonnets we have it as told, or reflected, by one of its own characters and participants. In these few Sonnets to the Dark Lady, which denote the inceptive period of Shakespeare's infatuation, such as Sonnets 127, and 128, we have the introduction to the story; in the Sonnets that admit guilt (Sonnets 138, 139, 140, 141, 147, 148, 149, 151 and 152), we have its continuation and ending, and in a few Sonnets such as 129, 140, etc., its epilogue.

It is evident from the tone of the *Apologie* and *The Victorie of English Chastitie, under the Fained Name of Avisa*, which were both published with the edition of 1596, that some knowledge, or rumour, of the frailty of Avisa's original was then abroad. Roydon, quoting "P. C." whom he represents as having criticised the intention of the first edition of *Willobie his Avisa*, writes: "he saith: the Author has registered the meanest." He then protests that no actual woman is portrayed, and says:

I thought that Chastitie had not beene the meanest, but rather one of the greatest gifts, that God giveth to men or women. If by the meanest, he meane any other object or subject of Willobie his Muse, then Chastity itselfe, (under the fained name of Avisa) it is a meaning of his owne making; and a subject of his own suggestion, far from the mind of the first maker.

Then, in the verses immediately following, while still claiming Avisa to be merely another name for chastity, he tells us:

> Avisa, both by Syre and spouse,
> Was linckt to men of meanest trade,

and further on in this poem again alludes to "P. C." strictures in the following verses:

> For this Avisa from above
> Came downe whose Syre, is mighty Jove.
>
> How can you terme her then Obscure,
> That shines so bright in every eye?
> How is she base that can endure,
> So long, so much and mounts so hie?
> If she you meane, have no such power,
> Tis your Avisa, none of our.
>
> This not seene bird, though rarely found,
> In proud attire, in gorgeous gownes,
> Though shee love most the countrie ground,
> And shunnes the great and wealthy townes,
> Yet if you know a bird so base,
> In this Device she hath no place.

Was Greekish dame twice ten yeares chast,
Did she twice fiftie flat deny?
Avisa hath Ten thousand past,
To thousands daily doth reply,
If your Avisa have a blot,
Your owne it is, we know her not.

It is very apparent that this ignorance of an original is pretended, and denial of a satirical intention false, and that this whole appended poem was intended more clearly to reveal the identity of the originals of the story. By this date (1596), it is very likely that the whole force of the satire was directed against Shakespeare; Southampton's complicacy with the Dark Lady had lasted only for a short period, and his affections had now for nearly two years been engaged inanother quarter. Towards the end of 1594, at the latest, and probably somewhat earlier in that year, he had become infatuated with Elizabeth Vernon, one of the Queen's ladies in waiting, whom he would have married but for the Queen's opposition to the match, and whom he eventually did marry in 1598, in spite of that opposition. Shakespeare's infatuation for the Dark Lady, continued for a much longer period, and was evidently of a much more serious nature. Roydon practically dismisses Southampton from the satire in 1596. In the "Apologie" he mentions "the Authour (now of late gone to God), and the poem on *The Victorie of English Chastitie* is signed, "Thomas Willoby Frater Henrici Willoby nuper defuncti." In republishing *Willobie his Avisa*, with its more indicative additions in 1596, Roydon, no doubt, was taking revenge for our poet's satire upon Chapman and himself in the revision of *Love's Labour's Lost*, in the preceding year. I have already shown that Shakespeare parodied a portion of Roydon's "Epistle to the Reader" in the utterances of the Curate Nathaniel, and in *Shakespeare and the Rival Poet*, have displayed his satire upon Chapman. Many other indicative thrusts against these two men now appear to me which before were dark. I shall instance a few of these.

In *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act IV. Sc. 2. we have Friar Mantuanus fairly pulled in by the ears with this object in view, as follows:

Hol. Fauste, precor gelida quando pecus omne sub umbra Ruminat,— and so forth. Ah, good old Mantuan! I may speak of thee as the traveller doth of Venice;

Venetia, Venetia,
Chi non ti vede non ti pretia.

Old Mantuan, old Mantuan! who understandeth thee not, loves thee not.

Here we have an utterly irrelevant passage from Mantuanus that has no possible connection with the dialogue; it is unctuously mouthed forth by Holofernes, merely to air his Latin. Why should Shakespeare quote Mantuanus to satirise the pedantry of these men? He does not again in any of his plays either refer to him or quote from him. In Roydon's "Epistle to the Reader," in the edition of 1594, of *Willobie his Avisa*, his pedantry is most obvious. He mentions many Latin writers, but actually quotes from and deprecates Friar Mantuanus as follows:

Hereof sprang these false accusing speeches of olde Poets.
Ludunt formosde: Casta est, quam nemo rogavit.
Faire wenches love to play:
And they are only chast whom no man doth assay.
And againe,
Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cyno,
Fœmina casta volat.
A rare seen bird that never flies, on earth, ne yet in ayre,
Like blackish swan a woman chast, if she be yong and faire.
This false opinion bred these foule mouthed speeches of Fryer Mantuan, *that upbraids all women with fleeting unconstancie.*

This is very evidently the source of Shakespeare's parody. The full force and humour of his satire upon these men in this play must have been very plain to the reading public at the time of its production.

The reissue of *Willobie his Avisa*, in 1596, was then very likely, directed mainly against our poet, though it would be felt somewhat by Southampton in recalling his own part in the incidents satirised.

When I first conceived the idea that Avisa might be identical with the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, the possibility that the scene of action of the story of *Willobie his Avisa*, was other than London, did not occur to me. I soon became quite convinced of the identity of Avisa with the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, and also that she (whoever she was), was an innkeeper's wife, and that the inn conducted by her husband was known by the sign of St. George, and that it was probably called the George or St. George Inn.

The verses already quoted indicative of Avisa's occupation, gave me good evidence of this fact which was further confirmed, to my mind, by a study of those plays that we may reasonably ascribe to about the same period as the production, and publication, of *Willobie his Avisa.*

I have long been convinced that Shakespeare reflects in many ways the actual conditions of his own, and his intimate friends' lives, in many of the plays of this period, and, in fact, of the whole of the Sonnet period. I am now of the opinion that few of these reflections are unconscious, but, as may be demonstrated in the intention of *Venus and Adonis*, *The Sonnets*, and *Lucrece*, that they were made with full intention, and, at times, with a specific object in view. When the present story is fully developed this view of the dramatic work of the Sonnet period may enable me to prove a somewhat more definite chronology for many of the earlier plays and consequently to realise a better understanding of the stages of Shakespeare's literary development than has yet been possible.

All internal chronological evidence must necessarily be somewhat involved by the facts that the bulk of the plays were held for many years as theatrical property previous to their publication; that they were not played continuously during these years, but were allowed to lapse and were revived at intervals, and that at each revival they would probably be revised to some extent. If, then, a basic motive, or even reflections of a personal nature, can be proved in any of the early plays, when they are correlated with the more intimate history of Shakespeare's life during the period herein being

displayed, it will help us to place a fairly definite date for the original production of those plays and will serve to indicate the period of the later time revisions. I will instance this probability by one parallel which guided me materially in tracing out the present history of Shakespeare and his friends.

Avisa, as has hitherto been shown, was the wife of an innkeeper who conducted a tavern displaying the sign of St. George.

> Seest yonder house, where hangs the badge
> Of Englands Saint, when Captaines cry
> Victorious land, to conquering rage,
> Loe, there my hopelesse helpe doth ly:
> And there that friendly foe doth dwell,
> That makes my heart thus rage and swell.

In the play of *King John*, which, from all known evidence and reasonable inference, must be dated somewhere between 1591 and 1594, we have the following lines, where the bastard in answer to King Philip's challenge,

> Mount, Chevaliers! to arms!

retorts,

> St. George,— that swing'd the dragon and e'er since,
> Sits on his horseback at mine hostess' door,
> Teach us some fence.

Shakespeare's *King John* is founded on the old play of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John*, and follows that play very closely in plot and action; in fact whole acts are practically rewritten, the verbiage only, being changed. This entire reference to St. George and the hostess is Shakespeare's own and is not transposed from, or suggested by, anything in the original play. That Shakespeare in writing these lines had in mind the

> . . . house, where hangs the badge
> Of England's Saint

is here apparent, and when we reflect that *King John* was probably being played on the London stage at, or about, the

time of Roydon's publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, the indicative intention of the words,

> . . . when Captaines cry
> Victorious land, to conquering rage,

as referring to the lines spoken by Falconbridge in addressing his forces to a charge, becomes evident.

By this parallel we are enabled to place a definite date, later than which we may well infer that *King John* was not written. It is evident that Shakespeare would not have written the lines quoted after the publication of the satire in 1594.

Whatever was the name of the inn presided over by Avisa, we have good proof in the verse quoted from *Willobie his Avisa*, that it displayed the sign of St. George, and a strong suggestion from the lines quoted from *King John*, that Shakespeare, in writing those lines, had in mind some tavern displaying this sign.

Let us now examine the poem of *Willobie his Avisa* somewhat further and see if we can get any clews as to the neighborhood or town in which Avisa's inn was situated after her marriage. That it was not a London tavern we are assured by a verse in the 27th Canto.

> You seeme as though you lately came,
> From London.

The first and second issues of this poem, however, were from a London press. The title page of the first issue reads: "Imprinted at London by John Windet 1594, 4to." We may reasonably infer then, that Roydon was resident in London at the time of the production and publication of this poem. He graduated at Oxford in 1580, but evidently lived in London for several years after this date. In 1587, Nashe mentions him with others as "men living about London who are most able to provide poetry." In 1594, the date of the first publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, Chapman in his dedication of *The Shadow of Night*, to Roydon implies that Roydon is living in London in the following sentence:

I should write more but my hasting out of town taketh me from the paper, so preferring thy allowance in this poor and strange trifle, to the passport of a whole city of others, I rest as resolute as Seneca, satisfying myself if but a few, if one, or if none like it.

It is probable that Roydon returned for a while to Oxford some years after his graduation in 1580, to take up his theological studies, but if Shakespeare's satire upon him as the curate "Nathaniel" be accepted, it is evident that he was already ordained, and sometime in holy orders, in 1594. If, then, the poem was written in London, and published in London, why but with indicative intention should it be dated, both in the first and second editions, as emanating from Oxford?

The "Epistle to the Reader" published in the first edition in 1594 ends as follows:

From my chamber in Oxford this first of October. Hadrian Dorrell.

The "Apologie" which was published with the second edition in 1596 is subscribed:

And so farwel. Oxford this 30. of June. 1596. Thine to use.
Hadrian Dorrell.

Seeing then that the satire though published and evidently written in London, by a man who had spent several years in Oxford, let us follow the evidently intentional clews he gives us and see whither we shall be led.

CHAPTER VIII

Connecting the Story of Willobie His Avisa and of the Sonnets with the Records of John Aubrey and Anthony Wood

IN *Willobie his Avisa*, Roydon, by innuendo and descriptive details, has endeavored to reveal, and, no doubt, did successfully reveal, to his contemporaries, the actual identity of Avisa. In dating his "Epistle to the Reader," in the edition of 1594, and his "Apologie" in the edition of 1596, as at Oxford, he evidently intended to inform his readers, that this city, was the scene of his story's action. Presuming that Avisa and the Dark Lady were one, we now know that she was an innkeeper's wife, that she lived at Oxford, and that her husband's inn displayed the sign of St. George; and, presumably, was known as the George Inn.

When I first became aware that London was not the scene of action of the story of *Willobie his Avisa*, and my clews led me to Oxford in my search, I naturally recalled the gossip of John Aubrey and Anthony Wood, regarding Shakespeare's alleged relations with Mistress Davenant, the hostess of the Crown Inn, and, so sure had I become of the truth of my clews, that I had little doubt but that I should find, that the Crown Inn, and the George Inn, were one; especially, as Aubrey in writing of the former as "the Inn now called the Crown" intimates that it was previously known by another name. A careful search of all sources at my command, has failed to substantiate this idea. The Crown Inn was, it is true, previously known by other names, but so far as I can learn, St. George was not one of them. In ancient times it was known as Drapery Hall, which name in time became corrupted into Pery Hall, and, in about the time of Elizabeth,

it was known as Spicers Hall, and also as the Kings Head. I cannot learn when this name was changed to the Crown, but Anthony Wood in styling it "the Inn *now* called the Crown," was evidently aware of the older name, the King's Head, which name, for a royalist centre, such as Oxford, we may assume would have borne much too unpleasant a significance to have been popular after 1649. It was probably changed after the execution of Charles I. In all records of the inn during the Commonwealth, it is mentioned as the Crown Inn. In my investigations regarding the older names of the Crown Inn, I was met by the fact that a St. George Inn existed in Oxford in Wood's time; that it was a very old inn and was known by that name, not only in the time of Elizabeth, but for over two hundred years before; and further, that an inn known as the George upon the same site, i. e., upon the southwest corner of St. George St. and Cornmarket St., in St. Michael's parish, and about two hundred yards north of the site of the Crown Inn in St. Martin's parish, has only recently been demolished to make way for a bank building.

In the time of Elizabeth, one travelling from Stratford to London, following the main travelled highway and passing through Oxford, would naturally enter that city, at the old North Gate (Bocardo); the George Inn would, in all probability, be the first city tavern a traveller would reach; it was situated, as was lately its namesake, a few yards from the site of the old city gates. We may then, well imagine Shakespeare, resting on his way to London, laying by his fardel at the George and for the first time encountering the spell of "those two mourning eyes" of "my hostess of the tavern, a most sweet wench."

The Dark Lady being an Oxford innkeeper's wife, we may readily see how Shakespeare, either travelling with his company, or on his way to and from Stratford, sojourning at Oxford, may have made her acquaintance; but in what manner could the young nobleman, Southampton (a Cambridge, not an Oxford scholar), have chanced to become so intimate with her in, or about, the spring of 1593?

In September, 1592, Southampton made one of the company of noblemen and courtiers who attended the Queen in her noted progress to Oxford and the north. We may infer that both public and private accommodations for guests at Oxford, would be charged to their fullest capacities upon the occasion of this progress, and that the better inns would be the tarrying place of many of the young noblemen in the Queen's train. It is likely that Southampton's arrangements for accommodations at Oxford, during the visit of the Court, would be made in advance of his arrival there, and at the advice, or, upon the information, of friends who had already sojourned there; and, quite possibly at the instance of Shakespeare himself, who, we may judge, from foregoing argument and data, was at this period, numbered amongst his acquaintances. This visit in September, 1592, is then, in all probability, the occasion referred to by "H. W." in the first verse of the 44th Canto, as the time when

First I saw this western ground.

Having now introduced Southampton to the George Inn and its fascinating, black-eyed hostess, let us leave him there, while we glance fifty years ahead, and examine the possible connection between the story of the years 1593–94,—revealed in *Willobie his Avisa*, and the third *book* of Sonnets,—and the vague gossip recorded by Anthony Wood, and John Aubrey, in the later time.

In May, 1642, just twenty-six years after Shakespeare's death, John Aubrey, the Wiltshire antiquarian, was entered, as gentleman commoner of Trinity College, Oxford. There were, no doubt, many people then living in Oxford, who could recall the town gossip of twenty, or thirty years past, and some few whose memories would carry them back fifty, or sixty years, in a vague and hazy manner. It is quite probable then that some misty, and perhaps distorted, remains of the scandal first created in 1594, and revived in 1596, 1599, 1605, 1609, and 1635, by the publications of *Willobie his Avisa* would be still extant, and available, in Oxford, as late as 1642 to 1660, especially, when connected with a name

as famous as Shakespeare's, and sought for by so patient a delver in the past, as the careful and curious Aubrey, and so interested an Oxonian as Anthony Wood. Aubrey reports that in Shakespeare's day the inn "now called the Crown Tavern" was conducted "by John Davanant, a vintner and a very grave and discreet citizen." Wood describes Davenant in much the same words; he says, "he was of a melancholick disposition and was seldom or never seen to laugh." Davenant's wife is reported by Wood to have been "a very beautiful woman, of very good wit and of conversation extremely agreeable." Shakespeare is linked with this couple by Aubrey as follows:

> Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to go into Warwickshire once a year, and did commonly on his journey lie at this house in Oxon, where he was exceedingly respected. I have heard Parson Robert say that Mr. William Shakespeare has given him a hundred kisses. Now Sir William (Davenant) would sometimes when he was pleasant over a glass of wine with his intimate friends (e. g., Sam Butler, author of Hudibras, and others), say, that it seemed to him that he writ with the very spirit of Shakespeare, and seemed contented enough to be thought his son. He would tell the story as above, in which way his mother had a very light report.

Anthony Wood's gossip practically coincides with Aubrey's and was very probably derived from Aubrey, though he also possibly came in contact with Aubrey's sources of information. The Crown Inn was evidently a favorite haunt of Wood's if we may judge by his numerous notations of moneys spent there.

We have another reflection of this gossip, derived from sources independent of either Wood or Aubrey. Oldys in his *Memoirs*, reports that Pope, on the authority of Betterton, the actor, told him that young Davenant (Sir William Davenant), when a boy, having said in answer to an old townsman, who asked him whither he was hurrying, that he was going to see his godfather, Mr. William Shakespeare, was met by the retort, "Have a care that you don't take God's name in vain."

Other literary contemporaries of Sir William Davenant also refer to this gossip. In a book published in 1655 entitled, *The Incomparable Gondimart,* and intended as a satire upon Davenant's poem *Gondimart,* we have the following stanza, questioning the new method of spelling his name "D'Avenant," which Sir William Davenant adopted, on the supposition that his forbears came from some Norman town of, or near, the name.

> Your wits have further than you rode
> You needed not to have gone abroad
> D'Avenant from Avon comes
> Rivers are still the Muses rooms
> Dort knows our name no more Durt on't
> And be but for that Davenant.

The allusion to Dort in connection with the name Davenant, is to the prominent part taken by John Davenant, Bishop of Salisbury, at the synod of Dort in 1618. The reference to the river Avon is very evidently a reflection of the gossip concerning Shakespeare and Mistress Davenant.

While I am inclined to repudiate the truth of Wood's and Aubrey's gossip as referring to the conditions existent in the year 1605–06 and later, and believe this gossip to be merely a belated echo of the scandal of the earlier years, I have no doubt but that Avisa, the Dark Lady, and Mistress Davenant were one. All reasonable inferences are in favor of this conclusion. It is extremely improbable that Shakespeare, who, in the years 1594 to 1596, had suffered from the exposure of his relations with the wife of an Oxford innkeeper, should in his more mature years, be laying himself open to a scandal of a similar nature, with another woman also the wife of an innkeeper, and in the same town.

Against the assumption that Avisa and Mistress Jane Davenant were one, there are two small facts which we will examine. Roydon, in *Willobie his Avisa,* in indicating Southampton and Shakespeare, has in both instances given us their actual initials "H. W." and "W. S.;" we may assume then that in the only instance where he gives us initials for the name of the woman at whom he points his

story he also gives her actual initials or, at least, uses initials of the names by which she would be readily known. In the "Epistle to the Reader" he says,

> I dare to sweare that I know one A. D. that either hath or would if occasion so offered, indure these and many greater temptations with a constant mind and settled heart.

Now Mistress Davenant, mother of Sir William Davenant, was named Jane. The initial "A" which Roydon gives us is evidently intended to stand for the name "Avisa;" which he admits, in several places in the "Epistle" and the "Apologie," to be a "fained name," that is, a name which he has coined; not being the real name of the woman at whom he points his story, and being admittedly a coined name, it is evidently intended in some way to indicate her identity. Seeing that Roydon first introduces Avisa to our notice as still unmarried, and goes to some length in describing the conditions of her early life, and the vicinity of her girlhood home, it occurs to me that the name Avisa, is a play upon her own family name; a name by which her identity would be better revealed (she being the daughter of an innkeeper), than by her christian name. I am, therefore, drawn to the opinion that Jane Davenant's name prior to her marriage, was Jane Bird, or Byrd. All through the "Epistle," and through the poem, Roydon makes frequent play upon the word bird, and in every instance in the whole book where the word is introduced, it is begun with a capital letter. An early line in the first Canto brings in the word:

> Of vertues Bird my muse must sing!

and, in the "Apologie," printed in 1596, Roydon in accounting for the name Avisa, writes: "The author, in this book compares the vertue of chastity unto a Bird," and again quotes the first line of the introductory verses. Later on, in the "Apologie," he practically admits that in using the name Avisa, he is playing upon the Latin *avis*, a bird; he writes:

Now, therefore, the latine word of a Birde being Avis, and the author (perchance) alluding unto that, did the rather call, his victorious mounting victory of Vertue, by the name of Avisa, as alluding to his owne allusion.

An examination of the introductory verses, the "Epistle," and the "Poem," will reveal the very frequent and evidently indicative use of this word; I offer the suggestion for what it is worth. The idea has added probability in the suggestive fact, (of which I was not aware when I came to these conclusions) that John Davenant, in making his will, names a John Bird as one of his executors. It is quite likely that this man was a relation by marriage.

One other point, apparently against the identity of Avisa as Mistress Jane Davenant, is the fact that the former was the hostess of the George Inn, and the latter of the Crown Inn. It becomes evident, however, when the records which we possess of John Davenant and his family are critically examined, that though in the year 1604, and onwards, he conducted the Crown Inn, and was a resident of St. Martin's parish, previous to that date he lived in some other Oxford parish, and evidently conducted some other inn. That that other inn was the St. George, seems a reasonable conclusion in the light of this history. Both the St. George Inn, and the Crown Inn, were owned by the city of Oxford, and—a lease falling in— were at the disposal of the corporation. The George Inn, was situated in St. Michael's parish: the Crown, in the adjoining parish of St. Martin's, both inns were on Cornmarket Street and were less than two hundred yards apart. From the facts of John Davenant's first lease for the Crown being dated in 1604, and that only the children born after that date are registered in St. Martin's parish, it is evident that he was a newcomer in that parish in 1604, though it may reasonably be presumed, that although a newcomer in St. Martin's, he was and had been, for sometime, a citizen of Oxford. It is quite probable that he was, even then, a member of the city corporation. Nine years later than this date he was elected bailiff of the city, and nine years still later attained to the mayoralty. The Crown Inn

being owned by the corporation of Oxford, and, a lease falling in, it is very improbable that it would be let to a newcomer in the city, or to one not already engaged in the same business. It is very likely, however, that such a good business opportunity as the Crown presented, would be eagerly sought by the less favorably located innkeepers of the city, and that the corporation would let the inn to one who already had an established reputation in Oxford, and preferably to one with whom they already had some experience as a tenant.

While I find no record of Davenant and his family in the limited transcript of the registers of St. Michael's parish, which Anthony Wood has given us, it is suggestive that the first record concerning him in the register of St. Martin's, is that of the baptism of his son Robert in 1604. Robert was his eldest son, William, John and Nicholas following in the order named. His three daughters were all older than any of the sons; this is proved by the fact, that in his will, after providing that the inn be kept open as a "taverne for the better reliefe of my children," he orders that "two of my youngest daughters shall keep the bar by turns." Had any of these daughters been born later than William Davenant, who was born in 1606, they could not have been over from ten to twelve years of age at this time; it is extremely improbable that Davenant would provide duties of this nature for such mere children.

Davenant's daughter Alice, married Dr. Sherbourne of Hertford; Elizabeth, married the Rev. Gabriel Bridges, and, after his death, Richard Bristowe, of Deddicote. Jane, the only one that remained in Oxford, following the advice of her father, given in his will, married a trusted employe of her father's, one Thomas Hallom, who continued to conduct the Crown, in the interest of the heirs, after Davenant's death. From the fact that Hallom's death, in the year 1636, is recorded upon a memorial tablet of the Davenants, in St. Martin's church, we may presume, that after the estate had been divided and he had married Jane Hallom, that he conducted the tavern in his own interests till he died. It is

probable that Jane Hallom continued the business for some time later; she lived until the year 1667, and was buried in St. Martin's parish. It is quite probable then that both Wood and Aubrey came in contact with her, and with others, whose memories would reach still further back, and who would be more communicative upon a subject so personal to Jane Hallom as the gossip concerning her mother and Shakespeare.

Jane Davenant died early in April, in the year 1622, and John Davenant, two weeks later. We have no record of their ages, nor of the date of their marriage. In satirising the relations between Southampton and Avisa, which had their inception in the autumn of 1592, Roydon pictures Avisa as a young woman of about twenty-four years of age, who had come to Oxford as a bride in about 1587–8. In some of the later cantos of the poem, he suggests that her husband was a somewhat dull and heavy individual, and her senior in years. Assuming Avisa and her husband to have been Jane and John Davenant, and dating their marriage, as indicated by Roydon, as somewhere about the years 1587–8, Mistress Davenant would at the time of her death, have reached about her fifty-fifth year.

CHAPTER IX

The Influence of the Dark Lady upon Shakespeare's Dramas

BEARING in mind the settled scepticism of the majority of modern critics regarding the possibility of solving the mystery of Shakespeare's Sonnets, and knowing also the interest in Shakespeare, yet general ignorance of the reading public concerning the already known facts of his life; I have presented the plain narrative, sketched by the foregoing facts and deductions, with the hope of establishing a new and definite basis of belief upon which to build a fuller development of the real story of his life between the years 1591 and 1601, the most productive period of his career, as well as the most interesting decade in Elizabeth's long reign. In order to keep my argument uninvolved, I have abstained from digressing into a consideration of certain interesting phases of concurrent political history, that may be shown to have influenced Shakespeare's lyric and dramatic work produced during this period. For the sake of lucidity of argument, I have also reluctantly refrained from explaining or shading, by the evidence of the plays, the bald fact of Shakespeare's relations with this woman.

I have long been convinced that Shakespeare's infatuation for the Dark Lady of the Sonnets was no temporary libertinism, lightly entered into and lightly forgotten, but that it was an absorbing and resistless passion, which, at least for a period, so possessed his heart and influenced his mind that it is to be found strongly reflected in nearly all of his dramatic work produced during the period of its continuance. Its fervor and intensity faded with his faith in its object, yet it never became completely overworn, but,

years after his mind had asserted its supremacy over his senses, its memory tinges his thought.

Coleridge, discussing the morality of Shakespeare's dramas, says, "Shakespeare has no innocent adulteries, no interesting incests, no virtuous vice;" he elsewhere adds: "In Shakespeare the heterogeneous is united as it is in nature, he followed the main march of the human affections. He entered into no analysis of the passions or faiths of men, but assured himself that such and such passions and faiths were grounded in our common nature and not in the mere accidents of ignorance or disease." As Shakespeare judged humanity in his dramas, so, in his Sonnets — wherein we have the key to his own personal drama — he judged himself; cloaking nothing, extenuating nothing; admitting to the full his fault, and though, when his critics "level" at his "abuses," he challenges him "that is without sin" to "cast the first stone," he yet sees more clearly, and deprecates more sincerely than his accusers, his moral and spiritual stultification.

There is not now much serious difference of opinion amongst critics in regard to the sequential chronology of Shakespeare's plays; while they differ in certain details a fairly reasonable common chronology has been reached. One cannot make a careful chronological study of the plays without becoming aware of a most extraordinary mental and spiritual development in the writer, even though the stages of this development have been somewhat obscured by the fact of the later time revisions of early plays. I doubt if, in the history of English literature, we can trace in any other author, such marked and continuous evidence of mental and moral growth, even in cases where we are acquainted with the minutest incidents of their lives. It is not possible that this growth, so plainly evidenced in his life's work, could be unaccompanied by a corresponding development in the character of our poet. It is difficult then to reconcile this advancement in mental power and character with the idea that Shakespeare should (in the year 1606, and later), submit to, and acquiesce in, conditions

against which his spirit bitterly revolted at a less mature period of his life. There can be little doubt, however, in the light of the foregoing evidence, that for a period, Shakespeare was carried away by his passion for this woman. Having compromised himself at the age of eighteen with a woman eight years his senior, whom he married from a sense of honor, or else was induced to marry by her friends, he left her at home in Stratford to seek his fortunes in London at about the age of twenty-three. About four or five years later, in the inceptive period of his literary work, he met this remarkable woman but for whose influence upon his heart and mind, we perhaps had never known the exquisite witchery of his female characters. For a period she enslaved his will, but she loosed his heartstrings, and he gave us *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Love's Labour's Lost*. None but a lover could have written the

> Lyric love, half angel and half bird
> And all a wonder and a wild desire!

of the former, and who but a lover could have written:

> But love first learned in a lady's eyes
> Lives not alone immured in the brain;
> But, with the motion of all elements,
> Courses as swift as thought in every power,
> And gives to every power a double power
> Above their functions and their offices.
> It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
> A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
> A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
> When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd:
> Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
> Than are the tender horns of cockled snails
> Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste:
> For valor is not love a Hercules,
> Still climbing trees in the Hesperides?
> Subtle as Sphinx; as sweet and musical
> As bright Apollo's lute string with his hair
> And when love speaks the voice of all the gods
> Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.
> Never durst poet touch a pen to write
> Until his ink were tempered with love's sighs.

While this defense of love, and in fact, the whole of *Love's Labour's Lost* was primarily intended as a playful answer to the gloomy theories set forth by Chapman in *The Shadow of Night*, it is a curious fact that Shakespeare did no really great work until about the age of twenty-nine, or thirty, when he had come strongly under the influence of this woman.

The earliest reflection that I find of Shakespeare's knowledge of her is in *The Comedy of Errors;* the composition of which play, in common with the majority of critics, I date early in the year 1591. Here she is introduced as the Hostess of the Porpentine. She is described as:

> . . . A wench of excellent discourse.
> Pretty and witty, wild, and yet, too, gentle:

a description that curiously matches that given of Mistress Davenant by Anthony Wood:

> A very beautiful woman, and of conversation extremely agreeable.

His attitude towards her in the beginning of his acquaintance seems to have been critical; while her beauty attracted him, her already dubious reputation and freedom of manner, evidently scandalised his provincial sense of propriety. That a young woman of her reputed sprightliness and wit should have been attracted to one of Shakespeare's mental mould, seems certain. It is probable then, that her notice flattered him and enhanced his awakening interest.

At this time Shakespeare had been married nine years and was the father of three children; he was twenty-seven years old and his wife thirty-five. It is to be presumed that between the time he first left home for London in, or about, 1586 or 1587, and the year 1591, he had revisited Stratford at intervals. His journey going and coming necessarily took him through the city of Oxford. If, under the spell of "those two mourning eyes" he lingered in Oxford beyond the necessary baiting, or night's rest, we may infer that the gossip of travellers was not wanting to convey rumors of the reasons for his tardiness to Stratford. In the querulous jealousy of Adriana and in the apparently ambiguous relations of

Antipholus of Ephesus with the hostess of the Porpentine, we probably have an unconscious reflection of the stage of Shakespeare's acquaintance with the Dark Lady, and of a phase of his own marital relations at this period. Antipholus, referring to the Hostess of the Porpentine, says:

> This woman that I mean, my wife — but I protest without desert — Hath oftentimes upbraided me withal: To her will we to dinner.

The next play in order of composition in which I find a reflection of his interest in this woman is *King John;* the composition of which I date between 1591 and 1592. In advancing this early date, I differ from all previous critics, who suggest its composition between the years 1594 and 1598. The evidences of maturity in this play that have led former critics to impute its composition to these late years are, I believe, the result of later time revision.

I can prove that *King John* was written by Shakespeare, at the instance of Southampton or Essex and their friends, to arouse sympathy for the cause of Sir John Perrot (an illegitimate son of Henry the Eighth, and a half-brother of the Queen), whom I indicate as the prototype of Falconbridge, and who, in 1591 and 1592, was held prisoner in the Tower on trial for his life on a trumped up charge of treason. Falconbridge is the one flesh and blood character in this otherwise mediocre play. The power of characterisation exhibited by Shakespeare in the delineation of this figure has puzzled many commentators. A comparison of the personality, character, and even of the incidents of the life of Sir John Perrot, with the sketch given us of Falconbridge, will fully account for Shakespeare's characterisation. In this as in other instances that may be shown, Shakespeare took his character from life. It is apparent also, that Shakespeare merely followed and enlarged upon the subjective intention of the author of *The Troublesome Raigne of King John,* who had Perrot's fortunes in mind in the original composition in about 1588.

The reflection of our poet's knowledge of the Dark Lady, that I find in this play is that hitherto quoted.

Bast. St. George, that swing'd the dragon, and e'er since
Sits on his horseback at mine hostess' door,
Teach us some fence.

It is improbable that Shakespeare would introduce a reference so indicative of his original, into a play written after the publication of *Willobie his Avisa*, in 1594. It is evident also that Roydon had this play and this passage in mind, in composing the following verse, and that in publishing it his intention was indicative.

Seest yonder house, where hangs the badge
Of *England's Saint, when Captaines cry*
Victorious land, to conquering rage,
Loe, there my hopelesse helpe doth ly:
And there that friendly foe doth dwell,
That makes my heart thus rage and swell.

Slight reflections of this woman's personality, and of her influence on Shakespeare, may also be noticed in *Love's Labour's Lost* and *All's Well That Ends Well;* the original composition of which plays I date in 1592, arguing that they both reflect the spirit and incidents of the Cowdray and Tichfield progress, which took place in the autumn of 1591. As both of these plays were very materially revised in later years the original reflections are now probably largely obliterated. The character of Rosaline in the former play, as well as the description of her personality, strongly suggest the Dark Lady of the Sonnets.

In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, while the personality of the Dark Lady is in no way suggested, the actual incidents of the third *book* of Sonnets (the composition of which I date in 1593), are plainly reflected.

In *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the composition of which I place in the early summer of 1594, her personality is suggested in the character of Hermia, and towards the end of the same year, she is again reflected in *Romeo and Juliet* as the "black-eyed Rosaline."

In the first part of *Henry IV.*, the original composition of which I date in 1593, or early in 1594, she becomes "my hostess of the tavern." I am convinced that the change in the character of the tavern hostess from a youthful married woman, "my hostess . . . a most sweet wench," in the first part of *Henry IV.*, to the aged widow, "Mistress Quickly," in the second part of that play, was made by Shakespeare after the republication of *Willobie His Avisa*, in its more indicative form in 1596, in order to disguise the identity of the original he formerly had in mind.

As time passes a reaction sets in, inevitable in such relations between a man of Shakespeare's fundamental morality and native sensibility, and a woman, however naturally captivating, necessarily deteriorating in character and charm through the corrupting influences of her vocation and environment.

Both the Sonnets and Plays, composed between 1596, and 1598–99, reveal upon Shakespeare's part, a growing spiritual depression culminating in the bitterness of *Troilus and Cressida.* While other influences contributed to, and deepened, the acerbity of these years, the awakening of his own conscience, and the resulting moral conflict regarding his relations with this woman, were the underlying causes of his despondency.

It has been shown that between 1594 and 1599, and for years later, an intermittent warfare of vilification and abuse was waged against Shakespeare by Chapman, Roydon, and other literary rivals, and that the republication of *Willobie his Avisa*, in 1596, and its attempted issue in 1599, was brought about with the object of disseminating the scandal concerning his relations with the Dark Lady. It has also been made evident that Shakespeare, both in the composition of new Plays and in the revision of old Plays, retaliated upon his rivals by caricaturing them personally, as well as by burlesquing their literary productions.

Shakespeare's retaliatory satire upon Roydon in *Midsummer Night's Dream* has already been set forth. In *Troilus and Cressida*, the original composition of which I

date in 1598, Shakespeare not only caricatures Chapman, Florio, and probably others of his assailants, but also travesties the Homeric story, and intentionally disparages and debases its characters and action as a satire upon Chapman's extravagant claims for the sanctity of Homer and his Greeks.

In the character of Cressida he seems again to have the Dark Lady in mind. All of the remorse and bitterness of the later Sonnets, written to the Dark Lady, is re-echoed in the delineation of Cressida and her actions. In exhibiting Cressida's disloyalty and supplementing the suggestion of her carnal unfaithfulness by showing her added perfidy of parting with Troilus' love pledge to Diomed, I am inclined to believe that Shakespeare reflects what, at that time, he believed to be the actual facts in the relations of the Dark Lady with certain of his own literary antagonists. Roydon, whose enmity to Shakespeare has been displayed; and Florio, whose hostility can be proved, lived both, for years, in Oxford and evidently were personally well acquainted with the Dark Lady's original. I have suggested that the third edition of *Willobie his Avisa* was published in 1599, to coincide with the publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim;* which contained two of the most expository Sonnets written to the Dark Lady. In the light of the foregoing history, and arguing from the plain evidence of the Sonnets to the Dark Lady, there can be no doubt that these Sonnets were written to this woman. If this be true, how, but by her knowledge or collusion could two of the most intimate and indicative have come to the cognizance of Shakespeare's antagonists at this time? However, they secured them it is evident that much of Shakespeare's bitterness, both in *Troilus and Cressida* and in the Sonnets of this period, was caused by the knowledge or suspicion that his Delilah was guilty of a double treason, and that the withes with which she bound him for his enemies, were his own Sonnets.

Previous to about 1598, in the social and literary warfare that was waged by Roydon, Chapman, and their clique, upon Shakespeare, he appears to have resisted them single-

handed. In, or about, 1598, however, literary allies, such as Dekker and Chettle, seem to have rallied to his standard; while the opposing forces were augmented at about the same period by the adhesion of both Marston and Jonson, who had now begun to collaborate in dramatic work with Shakespeare's arch enemy, Chapman. Thereupon ensued the series of much misinterpreted dramatic bickerings that have been named by past critics the "war of the theatres."

Early in 1599, in order publicly to answer Chapman's and Marston's attack upon him in *Histrio-Mastix*, Shakespeare, whose company was at that time performing at the Blackfriars, which was a private theatre, transferred *Troilus and Cressida*, to his allies Dekker and Chettle, who revised it for the public boards, accentuating the satire upon Chapman and introducing satire upon Marston, whom they pilloried as "Thersites." The line, "When rank Thersites opes his mastic jaw" pertains to this period of revision. The word "mastic" being an evident allusion to *Histrio-Mastix*. This play continued to be used at intervals both by Henslowe, to whom Dekker and Chettle had sold it, and whom Jonson's hostility had drawn into this theatrical warfare, and also by the Lord Chamberlain's Company, against Chapman and his coterie, and was finally revised and published by Shakespeare, in answer to a new attack of Chapman's, in 1609.

There can be no doubt, however, that the love episode, and the characterisation of Cressida pertain to the play in its original form, and to the year 1598. The following lines from *Histrio-Mastix* (usually attributed to Marston and collaborators by critics who have had no inkling of the theory here being developed), plainly refers to Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, and distinctly parodies the actual incident of the love pledge, by parting with which to Diomed, I argue, that Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida*, tacitly symbolised the Dark Lady's perfidy in parting with his Sonnets to his enemies.

> Troylus. Come, Cressida, my cresset light,
> Thy face doth shine both day and night,

Behold, behold thy garter blue
Thy knight his valiant elbow wears,
That when he *Shakes* his furious *Speare*,
The foe, in shivering fearful sort,
May lay him down in death to snort.
Cressida. O knight, with valour in thy face,
Here take my screene, wear it for grace;
Within thy helmet put the same,
Therewith to make thy enemies lame.

The play of *Histrio-Mastix* or *The Player Whipt*, was probably the earliest answer of Chapman's allies to Shakespeare's Homeric perversions. In later years, Jonson, Marston and Chapman, each allude critically to Shakespeare's misrepresentation of what they seem to accept as Greek history.

I am inclined to date the termination of intimate relations between Shakespeare and the Dark Lady of the Sonnets, at about the period of the original composition of *Troilus and Cressida* in 1598; though his adversaries still continued for several years to resuscitate the memory of the scandal.

The seventh *book* of Sonnets to the Earl of Southampton; the composition of which I assign to the autumn of 1599, while referring to Shakespeare's relations with the Dark Lady as of comparatively recent date, also plainly reflects the catastrophe, tacitly implied in the previous composition of *Troilus and Cressida*. The temporary period of wrathful irritability and vexation exhibited by Shakespeare in this play and in the Sonnets, was followed by a short season of satisfaction and philosophic content, arising from the pleasure he found in his renewed intimacy with his friend Southampton.

Essex and Southampton were now estranged from the Court; the former being practically a prisoner, while Southampton, as reported by Rowland White, passed his time "merely in going to plays every day." It is not difficult to realise what those plays were and who was their maker and producer; nor, in the light of the subjective theory of the plays of the Sonnet period is it difficult to read the subjective

interest in the one play that all evidence places, and all critics impute, to the latter part of the year 1599. In endeavoring to mitigate Southampton's troubles, and to lead him, in *As You Like It*, into the "golden world" of phantasy and philosophy, Shakespeare, for a time, forgot his own.

Whatever other dramatic composition Shakespeare worked upon in the autumn of 1599, there can be little doubt that *As You Like It* was written and presented at that time. For no other of Shakespeare's plays is there such complete unanimity amongst the critics in regard to the date of composition, though no former critic has based his conclusions upon the personal and subjective theory here being evolved.

In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare adumbrates the estranged relations subsisting at the period of its composition between the Court and the faction of Essex and his friend, Southampton. In treating so obviously of a matter of such extreme political delicacy and danger, he shields himself from the possible charge of political reference by selecting for the basis of his plot and action one of the most popular novels of the day. As in the instances of other plays, such as *King John*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, where the bases upon which Shakespeare built his plots are known, a clew to the personal and subjective features of *As You Like It*, may be traced by considering the divergences of its plot and characterisation from its accepted original, and, noting the harmony between the nature of these divergences and the personal revelations of the Sonnets, produced at the same period.

In Lodge's *Rosalynde*, which is the basis of *As You Like It*, there are no originals for the characters of Touchstone and Jacques who impart to this play nearly all the philosophy it contains. Through the mouth of Jacques, I am convinced that Shakespeare expresses his own sentiments, and, in the person of Jacques, projects into the play his own personality as he then conceives himself to be. In the slight sketch given by the Duke, of Jacques' immoral past, Shakespeare re-echoes the personal confessions of the seventh *book*

of Sonnets; which was composed only a few months before.

> Duke S. For thou thyself has been a libertine
> As sensual as the brutish sting itself.

In *Troilus and Cressida*, we have depicted in action the bitter catastrophe in Shakespeare's relations with the Dark Lady, and in *As You Like It*, its repentant and philosophic aftermath.

The short Indian summer of Shakespeare's renewed friendship with Southampton, towards the end of 1599, and the beginning of 1600, was followed by several months of separation caused by Southampton's absence in Ireland and on the Continent. During, and following, this period, Sir Robert Cecil, whose spies were everywhere, lost no opportunity to discredit the fallen faction, and to bring Essex within his power for life or death.

Only one of Shakespeare's plays to which the title of Comedy may reasonably be given was written later than *As You Like It*, which was undoubtedly produced in the autumn of 1599. Several Comedies composed at, or shortly before this period were, however, afterwards revised. The subsequent revisions of these earlier Comedies has misled critics into attributing their composition to later years.

Twelfth Night, which I unhesitatingly place as the last of the true Comedies, was composed a few weeks preceding Essex' rebellion, and probably at the suggestion or request of the Earl of Southampton. All critics date this play some time between the end of 1598, and the beginning of 1602. The fact that Meres does not mention it in 1598, seems to prove its later composition; and a reference to its performance in February, 1602, in a contemporary diary demonstrates its earlier date.

Feeling convinced from its tone of humorous raillery that it could not have been written after the disaster to Essex and Southampton, of February, 1601, I concluded from its title that it was written for some Twelfth Night festivity and, consequently, for that holiday in 1599, 1600, or 1601.

An examination of contemporary records of these three occasions seems clearly to prove that it was composed for presentation at Gray's Inn, on Twelfth Night, 1601.

In view of the close connection between Shakespeare and the Earl of Southampton, who was a member of Gray's Inn, it is reasonable to assume that the performance of *The Comedy of Errors* given there, in December, 1594, was arranged for through that nobleman's influence, and that this was not the only occasion during his long connection with our poet upon which he brought about performances of his plays at that place.

In a letter written by John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, dated February 3, 1601, referring to the Christmas holidays past, he writes: "During the holyedayes here was the Duke of Bracciano (chiefe of the family of the Orsini by Rome), that came into France with the new Quene, his cousin Germane. The Quene entertained him very graciously, and to shew that she is not so old as some would have her, danced both measures and galliards in his presence. He was feasted by the Lord Burghley for some favor shewn to Will Cecil or his other sonnes at their being in Italy and should also have been by the Lord Treasurer and by Gray's Inn *that made preparation of shewes to entertaine him*, but he made such haste away that they were disappointed."

All external and internal evidence suggests the composition of this play early in 1601. Its title denotes its intended use for Twelfth Night festivities. Its sub-title, of *What You Will*, appears to show Shakespeare's disappointment on its non-presentation upon the occasion for which it was written. *Orsino*, the young Duke of Illyria of *Twelfth Night*, personifies, and was intended to compliment, *Orsini*, the young Duke of Bracciano.

Chamberlain's letter reporting this nobleman's visit was written on February 3d; five days afterwards Essex and his friends were stampeded by Cecil into revolt. Less than three weeks later, Essex was executed, and Southampton in the Tower. The young Duke of Bracciano had visited England at an inopportune time to enjoy the society of such English-

men as Essex, Southampton, Rutland, Blount, Henry Neville and Charles Danvers, men who by travel or fame were best known to the continental nobility, and also at an inopportune time for Cecil's plans against Essex, which were now coming rapidly to a head. A performance at Gray's Inn would give the Duke an opportunity to meet, if not Essex, yet others of his faction. Such a meeting might lead to his becoming a go-between or a pleader for them with the Queen. He is entertained at the Court and afterwards by Cecil's brother and then by some means all other engagements are broken and his departure is expedited. "He made such haste away that they were disappointed" writes Chamberlain. There can be little doubt that Essex and his party, including Shakespeare, were among the disappointed. It is extremely probable that this nobleman's visit at this time to England was instigated by Henry of Navarre, with the hope of restoring friendly relations between the Queen and Essex. Nearly all the leaders of Essex' party were known to him personally and in his good graces. Nothing of political importance in England escaped Henry's knowledge, and he was too acute a reader of men to have any misapprehension regarding Cecil's deadly intentions towards Essex, who for years had been his friend and champion in England.

Though *Twelfth Night* was written for Southampton in January, 1601, it is doubtful if he saw it performed before his liberation in 1603.

Both his interest in the Dark Lady, and the literary hostilities with Chapman and his clique, are now for a time forgotten, and Shakespeare's mind is occupied in formulating expression of his recent spiritual and mental experiences. *Julius Cæsar* is his first utterance; his palpable sympathy with Brutus and his fellow-conspirators expresses as plainly as it was safe to do, his feelings for Essex and Southampton.

He must, however, go deeper into the matter. He must analyse the storm-tossed soul of Essex and account for this brave and brilliant leader's vacillation and inadequacy towards the end, he must search out and exhibit the evil thing he fought against, the horror and hatred of which so

absorbed his mind that action was temporarily paralysed. But he must do it all in such a manner that though his intention is clear to his friends, and to Essex' and Southampton's sympathisers, the law against dramatic reference to matters of state is not infringed. So he does the thing he exhibits the players within the play as doing; he revises an extant drama — an old favorite — the hackneyed and blood-and-thunder play of *Hamlet*, which had been on the boards for years, and into its dead clay now breathes the breath of current life. It is evident, however, that cleverly as he has disguised his political reflections exception was taken to the play and its performance prohibited until young Fortinbras, in the person of King James, arrived in England, when the play was again revised, enlarged and exhibited freely.

It is impossible now to judge in what manner the play of this name recorded in the Stationers' Register in July, 1602, "as yt was lateli Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes" differed from the Quarto of 1604, the title page of which states that it was "Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect coppie." The claim made here for this Quarto as being "according to the true and perfect coppie" evidently challenges the genuineness of an earlier Quarto issued in 1603, that in the judgment of all critics palpably contains little of Shakespeare's work.

When this play was enlarged and published in 1604, the Queen was dead, Southampton's imprisonment ended, while he and others of Essex' friends now stood high in the favor of the new king. Shakespeare's company could now freely exhibit this play in its entirety, or publish it without restriction or inhibition from the authorities. It is probable, however, that in its first form upon its production after the death of Essex, that its public performance was inhibited and its publication stayed for political reasons and that the temporary disfavor of the authorities which seems to have fallen upon Shakespeare and his company at this period was in some measure due to Shakespeare's known, and probably expressed, sympathy for Essex and his friend, Southampton.

Hamlet, in its present revised and enlarged form, while spiritually reflecting the chaotic and pessimistic mood induced in Shakespeare by the downfall of his friends, is reinforced by much matter of subjective interest suggestive of the continuance into the years 1603 and 1604, of the literary and theatrical hostilities of the opposing dramatic clique now headed by Chapman, Jonson, and Marston.

The last reflection I have noticed concerning Shakespeare's relations with the Dark Lady is in the seventh *book* of Sonnets; the production of which I have dated at the end of 1598. I have also noticed a probable allusion to the affair in *As You Like It;* which I date a little later. Both of these reflections, however, are reminiscent.

The changed conditions of Shakespeare's position in regard to the Court and Court favor produced by Southampton's fall, as well as the renewed hostilities of his literary and dramatic rivals, and the growing favor of the public towards the theatres for which they wrote, now, for a few years, turned our poet's attention to the building up, and defence, of his theatrical interests against the encroachments of his rivals. During this period, and for several years later, I find no reflection in the plays he produced, of his former interest in the Dark Lady. He seems, however, to have visited Oxford at intervals with his company during these years, and if the gossip of Anthony Wood is to be believed, to have been on friendly terms with the Davenants during the childhood of their son Robert, who was born in 1604.

In the year 1607, in the composition of *Antony and Cleopatra*, we have what appears to be a belated, and the last resurgence in any of his plays, of the memory of his old infatuation. Cleopatra is referred to in only one other of Shakespeare's plays. In 1599, she is mentioned in *As You Like It* in the following lines:

> Nature presently distilled
> Helen's cheek, but not her heart,
> Cleopatra's majesty,
> Atalanta's better part,
> Sad Lucretia's modesty;

which show at that period, a conception of her personality differing essentially from the characterisation developed in 1607. Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* is admittedly derived from Sir Thomas North's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans;* the same source from which he took his basis for *Julius Cæsar*, and *Coriolanus*. Shakespeare follows his original very closely in action and plot, and in fact, in portions of the play, actually paraphrases North's prose into verse. The characterisation of Cleopatra, however, is entirely his own; no possible suggestion of the seductive witchcraft of his black-eyed siren is to be found in the original.

In choosing the subject of *Antony and Cleopatra*, in 1607, Shakespeare evidently chose purely in the interests of his art and not, as in the case of certain of the earlier plays that may be shown, with a subjective interest in mind. In developing his characterisation, however, the memory of his old infatuation, and its object, reasserts itself, and he depicts his remembered model as the Egyptian Queen. In stirring the ashes of his dead fires, it is possible, however, that unextinguished sparks appeared.

As in the case of other plays, already noted, where he seems to select one character to voice his own sentiments; such as Biron, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Jacques, in *As You Like It*, and Ulysses, in *Troilus and Cressida*, so, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Enobarbus becomes the chorus, or critic, of the action. In analysing and criticising the character of Cleopatra, the cynical Enobarbus cannot always maintain his stage censoriousness. "She is cunning past man's thought," says Antony. "Alack, sir, no," replies Enobarbus, "her passions are made of nothing but the finest parts of pure love: we cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report: this cannot be cunning in her; if it be she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove."

In reporting of her in Rome there is sympathy in every line of Enobarbus' description. The Sonnets of ten years ago are recalled in his answer to Mæcenas who says:

Now Antony will leave her utterly.
Eno. Never; he will not:
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety: other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry
Where most she satisfies: for vilest things
Become themselves in her.

The 150th Sonnet, written to the Dark Lady in about 1596 or 1597, reads:

O from what power hast thou this powerful might
With insufficiency my heart to sway?
To make me give the lie to my best sight,
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds
There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds?

It is evident from the later time reflections of this Sonnet, quoted above, that the bitterness of the period of *Troilus and Cressida* has passed away, and that, even if the old equivocal relations have ceased, the old influence is not entirely overworn.

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, Shakespeare, while closely following the historical basis from which he worked, has maintained a height of feeling and poetic exaltation throughout its entire action, unexampled in fire and power, in any other of his productions.

The sustained inspiration of his art in this instance was undoubtedly due to the memory of his own personal experience, and now when it had become a thing of the past and its bitterness overworn, that he recognised in it a certain philosophic "benefit of ill," seems to be suggested in Enobarbus' reply to Antony, who says:

Would I had never seen her!
Eno. O, sir, you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work; which not to have been blest withal would have discredited your travel.

APPENDIX

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA.

OR

The true Picture of a modest Maid, and of a chast and constant wife.

In Hexamiter verse. The like argument whereof, was neuer hereto fore published.

Read the preface to the Reader before you enter farther.

A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband, but she that maketh him ashamed, is as corruption in his bones. Prouerb. 12. 4.

Imprinted at London by *Iohn Windet*.

1594.

TO ALL THE CONSTANT LADIES & GENTLEWOMEN OF ENGLAND THAT FEARE GOD.

Pardon me (sweete Ladies,) if at this present, I deprive you of a just Apology in defence of your constant Chastities, deserved of many of you, and long sithence promised by my selfe, to some of you: and pardon mee the sooner, for that I have long expected that the same should have beene perfourmed by some of your selves, which I know are well able, if you were but so wellwilling to write in your owne praise, as many men in these dayes (whose tounges are tipt with poyson) are too ready and over willing, to speake and write to your disgrace. This occasion had bene most fit, (publishing now the praise of a constant wife) if I had bene but almost ready. But the future time may agayne reveale as fit a meanes heereafter for the perfourmance of the same: if so it seeme good to him that moderateth all. Concerning this booke which I have presumed to dedicate to the safe protection of your accustomed courtesies; if yee aske me for the persons: I am altogether ignorant of them, and have set them downe, onely as I finde them named or disciphered in my author. For the trueth of this action, if you enquire, I will more fully deliver my opinion hereafter. Touching the substance of the matter it selfe, I thinke verily that the nature, woordes, gestures, promises, and very quintessence, as it were, is there lively described, of such lewd chapmen as use to entise silly maides and assayle the Chastity of honest women. And no doubt but some of you, that have beene tried in the like case, (if ever you were tryed,) shall in some one part or other acknowledge it to bee true. If mine Author have found a Brytaine Lucretia, or an English Susanna, envy not at her prayse (good Ladies) but rather endevor to deserve the like. There may be as much done for any of you, as he hath done for his AVISA. Whatsoever is in me, I have vowed it wholy, to the exalting of the glory of your sweete sex, as time, occasion and ability shall permit. In the meane time I rest yours in all dutyfull affection, and commend you all to his protection, under whose mercy we enjoy all.

Yours most affectionate,

HADRIAN DORRELL.

TO THE GENTLE & COURTEOUS READER

It is not long sithence (gentle Reader) that my very good frend and chamber fellow M. Henry Willobie, a yong man, and a scholler of very good hope, being desirous to see the fashions of other countries for a time, departed voluntarily to her Majesties service. Who at his departure, chose me amongst the rest of his frends, unto whome he reposed so much trust, that he delivered me the key of his study, and the use of all his bookes till his returne. Amongest which (perusing them at leysure) I found many prety & witty conceites, as I suppose of his owne dooing. One among the rest I fancied so much, that I have ventered so farre upon his frendship, as to publish it without his consent. As I thinke it not necessary, to be over curious in an other mans labour, so yet something I must say for the better understanding of the whole matter. And therefore, first for the thing it selfe, whether it be altogether fayned, or in some part true, or altogether true; and yet in most part Poetically shadowed, you must give me leave to speake by conjecture, and not by knowledge. My conjecture is doubtfull, and therfore I make you the Judges. Concerning the name of AVISA, I think it to be a fained name, like unto Ovids Corinna; and there are two causes that make mee thus to thinke. First, for that I never heard of any of that name that I remember; and next for that in a voide paper rolled up in this boke, I found this very name AVISA, written in great letters a prety distance a sunder, & under every letter a word beginning with the same letter, in this forme.

A.	V.	I.	S.	A.
Amans.	vxor.	inviolata.	semper.	amanda.

That is in effect. A loving wife, that never violated her faith, is alwaies to be beloved. Which makes me conjecture that he minding for his recreation to set out the Idea of a constant wife, (rather describing what good wives should doe then registring what any hath done) devised a womans name, that might fitly express this womans nature whom he would aime at: desirous in this (as I conjecture) to imitate a far off, ether Plato in his Common wealth, or More in his Utopia. This my surmise of his meaning, is confirmed also by the sight of other odd papers that I found, wherein he had, as I take it, out of Cornelius

Agrippa, drawen the severall dispositions of the Italian, the Spanyard, the French man, the German, and the English man, and how they are affected in love. The Italian dissembling his love, assaileth the woman beloved, with certain prepared wantonesse: hee praiseth her in written verses, and extolleth her to the Heavens.

The Spanyard is unpatient in burning love, very mad with troubled lasciviousnesse, hee runneth furiously, and with pittyfull complaintes, bewailing his fervent desire, doth call upon his Lady, and worshippeth her, but having obtained his purpose maketh her common to all men.

The Frenchman endevoreth to serve, he seeketh to pleasure his woman with songes and disports &c.

The Germane & Englishman being nigher of nature, are inflamed by little and little, but being enamored, they instantly require with arte, and entice with giftes &c. Which severall qualities are generally expressed by this Author in the two first trials or assaultes made by the noble man, and the lustie Cavalieros, Captaines, or Cutters &c. Signifying by this generalitie that our noble men, gentlemen, captaines, and lusty youthes have of late learned the fashions of all these countries, how to sollicit their cause, & court their Ladies, and lovers, & this continueth from the second Canto, to the ende of the two and twentieth.

After this he comes to describe these natures againe in particular examples more plainely, and beginneth first with the French man under the shadow of these Letters, D.B. from the three and twentieth Canto unto the end of the three and thirtieth. Secondly the Englishman or Germane, under these Letters, D.H. from the 34. Canto unto the ende of the forty three. Lastly the Spanyard and Italian, who more furiously invadeth his love, & more pathetically indureth then all the rest, from the forty foure Canto to the ende of the booke. It seemes that in this last example the author names himselfe, and so describeth his owne love: who that was, I know not, and I will not bee curious.

All these are so rightly described according to their nature, that it may seeme the Author rather meant to showe what suites might be made, and how they may be aunsweared, then that there hath bene any such thing indeede.

These thinges of the one side leade me to thincke it altogether a fained matter, both for the names and the substance, and a

plaine morrall plot, secretly to insinuate, how honest maides & women in such temptations should stand upon their guard, considering the glory & praise that commendes a spotlesse life, and the blacke ignominy, and foule contempt that waiteth upon a wicked and dissolute behaviour.

Yet of the other side, when I do more deepely consider of it, & more narrowly weigh every particular part, I am driven to thinke that there is some thing of trueth hidden under this shadow. The reasons that move me are these, First in the same paper where I found the name of AVISA written in greate letters, as I said before, I found this also written with the Authors owne hande, videlicet. Yet I would not have AVISA to be thought a politike fiction, nor a truethlesse invention, for it may be, that I have at least heard of one in the west of England, in whome the substaunce of all this hath bene verified, and in many thinges the very wordes specified: which hath indured these and many more, and many greater assaultes, yet, as I heare, she standes unspotted, and unconquered.

Againe, if we marke the exact descriptions of her birth, her countrie, the place of her abode; and such other circumstances, but especially the matter and manner of their talkes and conferences, me thinkes it a matter almost impossible that any man could invent all this without some ground or foundation to build on.

This inforceth me to conjecture, that though the matter be handled poetically, yet there is some thing under these fained names and showes that hath bene done truely. Now judge you, for I can give no sentence in that I know not. If there bee any such constant wife, (as I doubt not but there may bee) I wish that there were more would spring from her ashes, and that all were such. Whether my Author knew, or heard of any such I cannot tell, but of mine owne knowledge, I dare to sweare, that I know one, A.D. that either hath, or would, if occasion were so offered, indure these, and many greater temptations with a constant mind and setled heart. And therefore here I must worthely reprehend the envious rage, both of Heathen poets, and of some Christian and English writers, which so farre debase the credite and strength of the whole sexe, that they feare not with lying toungs wickedly to publish, that there are none at all that can continue constant, if they bee tried. Hereof sprang these false accusing speeches of the old Poets.

Ludunt formosae, casta est, quam nemo rogauit.
Faire wenches love to play.
And they are onely chast, whome no man doth assay.
And againe
Rara avis in terris, nigroq; simillima cygno,
Fœmina casta volat.

A rare-seene bird that never flies, on earth ne yet in aire,
Like blackish Swan, a woman chast; if she be yong and faire.

This false opinion bred those foule-mouthed speeches of Frier Mantuan, that upbraides all women with fleeting unconstancy. This made Ariosto and others to invent, and publish so many lewd and untrue tales of womens unfaithfulnes. And this is the cause, that in this booke ye shall so often find it objected against AVISA by all her sutors, that no woman of what degree so ever can be constant if she be much requested, but that the best will yeeld. But the best is, this common and course conceit is received but onely among common, lewd, & carelesse men, who being wicked themselves, give sentence of all others, according to the loose and lawlesse humours wherewithall they feele their owne straying and wandring affections to be infected. For they forsooth, because in divers and sundrie places, (as they often wickedly boast) they may for an Angell and a great deale lesse, have hired nagges to ride at their pleasure, such as make a sinnefull gaine of a filthy carkasse; because in other countries, where stewes and brothelhouses are winckt at, they see oftentimes, the fairest and not the meanest flocke to the fellowship of such filthy freedome, Thinke presently, that it is but a mony matter, or a little intreatie, to overthrow the chastity of any woman whatsoever. But if all women were in deede such as the woman figured under the name of AVISA either is, or at least is supposed to bee, they should quickly restore againe their auncient credite and glory which a few wicked wantons have thus generally obscured. In the twentie and seven Canto, I find how D.B. perswadeth with A. that it is little sinne or no fault to love a frend besides her husband. Whereupon, inquiring more of the matter I have heard some of the occupation verifie it for a trueth: That among the best sort, they are accompted very honest women in some cities now, that love but one frend besides their husband, and that it is thought amongst them a thing almost lawfull. If this be true, (as I hardly thincke it to bee true, because wicked men feare

not to report any untrueths) but if it be true, I feare least the ripenesse of our sin cry to the Lord for vengeance against us, that tremble not at the remembrance of Gŏds judgements, that have bound a heavy curse & woe upon the backe and conscience of them, That speake good of evill, and evill of good. That is, such as are growne to that pointe, that they are no longer ashamed of their sinne, nor care for any honesty, but are become wilfully desperate in the performance of all kind of impiety.

But I leave this to the godly preachers to dilate more amply. And to returne to my purpose, although I must confesse that of all sortes of people, there have been and will be still some loosely and lewdly given, yet this can bee no excuse to lavishe tongues, to condemne all generally. For, I dare to venter my hand, and my head upon this point, that, let the foure moral vertues be in order set downe. { Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice } and let the holy scriptures be searched from the beginning to the end, & let all the ancient histories both ecclesiasticall and prophane be thorowly examined, and there will bee found women inough, that in the performance of all these vertues, have matched, if not overmatched men of every age, which I dare myselfe, to verifie in their behalfes upon the venter and losing of my credite, if I had time and leasure. Among infinite numbers to give you a taste of one or two: for wisedome, and Justice, what say you to Placilla wife to the Emperour Theodosius? She was wont every day in her owne person, to visite the sicke, the poore, and the maymed: And if at any time shee saw the Emperour declining from Justice to any hard course, shee would bid him Remember himselfe, from whence he came, & what he was, in what state hee had bene, and in what state he was now; which if he would do, he should never wax proud nor cruell, but rather humble, mercyfull and just.

t
t. lib.

For temperance, how say you to the wife of one Pelagius, of Laodicea which being yong her selfe, and married to a young and lusty man, was yet notwithstanding contented willingly to forbeare carnall pleasure, during her whole life. I bring not this womans example, for any liking I have to her fact, being lawfully married, but rather, against the curious carpers at womens strength, to prove that some women have done that which few men can doe.

eccl.
c. 10.

For Fortitude and temperance both, I finde, that in Antioche, there was a noble woman with her two daughters, rather then they would be defloured, cast themselves allwillingly into a great river, and so drowned themselves. Eusebius li 8. cap. 24.

And also, that in Rome there was a Senatours wife, who when she heard, that there were messengers sent from Maxentius the tirant, to bring her unto him, perforce, to be ravished of him; and seeing that her husband was not of ability and power to defend her, she used this pollicy. Shee requested that they would give her leave to put on som better apparel & to attire herselfe more decently: which being graunted, and she gotten into a chamber by herselfe, she tooke a sword and perced her selfe to the hart, rather then she would be counted the Emperours whore. Cap. 27. Lo for Blandi in Eusebius rare examp of constanc and fortitu

By this may be seene what might be sayd in this argument, but leaving this to some other time, or some other better able; I returne to my author.

For the persons & matter, you have heard my conjecture, now for the manner of the composition, disposition, invention, and order of the verse, I must leave every mans sence to himselfe, for that which pleaseth me, may not fancy others. But to speake my judgement, the invention, the argument, and the disposition, is not common, nor (that I know) ever handled of any man before in this order. For the composition and order of the verse: Although hee flye not alofte with the winges of Astrophell nor dare to compare with the Arcadian shepheard, or any way match with the dainetie Fayry Queene; yet shall you find his wordes and phrases, neither Tryviall nor absurd, but all the whole worke, for the verse, pleasant, without hardnesse, smooth without any roughnesse, sweet without tediousnesse, easie to be understood, without harrish absurdity: yeelding a gratious harmony every where, to the delight of the Reader.

I have christened it by the name of WILLOBY HIS AVISA: because I suppose it was his doing, being written with his owne hand. How he will like my bouldness, both in the publishing, and naming of it, I know not. For the incouraging and helping of maides and wives to holde an honest and constant course against all unhonest and lewd temptations, I have doone that I have doone. I have not added nor detracted any thing from the worke it selfe, but have let it passe without altering any thing: Onely in the end I have added to fill up some voyd paper certaine fragmentes and ditties, as a resolution of a chast

and constant wife, to the tune of Fortune, and the praise of a contented mind, which I found wrapped altogether with this, and therefore knew not whether it did any way belong unto this or not.

Thus leaving to trouble your patience with farder delaies, I commit you to the good government of Gods spirit. From my chamber in Oxford this first of October.

HADRIAN DORRELL.

ABELL EMET IN COMMENDATION OF WILLOBIES AVISA.

To Willoby, you worthy Dames yeeld worthy prayse,
Whose silver pype so sweetly sounds your strange delayes,
Whose loftly style, with golden winges remountes your fame,
The glory of your Princely sex, the spotles name:
O happy wench, who so she be if any be,
That thus deservd thus to be praisd by Willobie.
Shall I beleeve, I must beleeve, such one there is,
Well hast thou said, long maist thou say, such on[e] there is;
If one there be, I can beleeve there are no more,
This wicked age, this sinfull tyme breeds no such store:
Such silver myntes, such golden mines who could refuse?
Such offers made and not recev'd, I greatly muse.
Such deepe deceit in frendly shewes, such tempting fittes,
To still withstand, doth passe the reach of womens wittes:
You Country maides, yee Pean nimphes rejoyce and sing,
To see from you a chast, a new Diana spring:
At whose report you must not frett, you may not frowne,
But rather strive by due desert for like renowne,
Her constant faith in hot assaye hath wonne the game,
Whose praise shall live, when she is dead with lasting fame.
If my conceit from strangers mouth may credit get,
A braver Theame, more sweetly pend, was never yet.

ABELL EMET.

IN PRAISE OF WILLOBIE HIS AVISA, HEXAMETRON TO THE AUTHOR.

In Lavine Land though Livie bost,
There hath beene seene a Constant dame:
Though Rome lament that she have lost
The Gareland of her rarest fame,
  Yet now ye see, that here is found
  As great a Faith in English ground.

Though Collatine have deerely bought,
To high renowne, a lasting life,
And found, that most in vaine have sought,
To have a Faire and Constant wife,
  Yet Tarquyne pluckt his glistering grape,
  And Shake-speare, paints poore Lucrece rape.

Though Susan shine in faithfull priase,
As twinckling starres in Christall skie,
Penelop's fame though Greekes do raise,
Of faithfull wives to make up three,
  To thinke the Truth and say no lesse,
  Our Avisa shall make a messe.

This number knits so sure a knot,
Time doubts, that she shall adde no more,
Unconstant Nature hath begot,
Of Fleeting Feemes such fickle store,
  Two thousand yeares have scarcely seene,
  Such as the worst of these have beene.

Then Avi-Susan joyne in one,
Let Lucres-Avis be thy name
This English Eagle sores alone,
And farre surmounts all others fame,
  Where high or low, where great or small,
  This Brytan Bird out-flies them all.

Were these three happie, that have found
Brave Poets to depaint their praise?
Of Rurall Pipe, with sweetest sound,
That have beene heard these many daies,
Sweete wylloby his Avis blest,
That makes her mount above the rest.

CONTRARIA CONTRARIIS
Vigilantius: Dormitanus.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA:

OR

THE TRUE PICTURE OF A MODEST MAIDE

and of a chaste and constant wife

CANT. I

Let martiall men, of Mars his praise,
Sound warlike trumpe: let lust-led youth,
Of wicked love, write wanton layes;
Let sheepeheards sing, their sheepe coates ruth:
The wiser sort, confesse it plaine,
That these have spent good time in vaine.

My sleepie Muse that wakes but now,
Nor now had wak't if one had slept,
To vertues praise hath past her vow,
To paint the Rose which grace hath kept,
Of sweetest Rose, that still doth spring,
Of vertues birde my Muse must sing.

The birde that doth resemble right,
The Turtles faith in constant love,
The faith that first her promise plight;
No change, nor chance could once remove:
This have I tri'd; This dare I trust,
And sing the truth, I will, I must.

Afflicted *Susans* spotlesse thought
Intis'd by lust to sinfull crime,
To lasting fame her name hath brought,
Whose praise incounters endlesse time:
I sing of one whose beauties warre,
For trials passe *Susanna's* farre.

The wandring Greekes renowmed mate,
That still withstoode such hote assayes,
Of raging lust whose doubtfull state,
Sought strong refuge, from strange delayes,
For fierce assaults and tryals rare,
With this my Nimph may not compare.

Hote tryals try where Golde be pure,
The Diamond daunts the sharpest edge,
Light chaffe, fierce flames may not indure,
All quickly leape the lowly hedge,
The object of my Muse hath past
Both force and flame, yet stands she fast.

Though Egle-eyde this bird appeare,
Not blusht at beames of Phoebus raies:
Though Faulkcon winged to pearce the aire,
Whose high-pla'st hart no feare dismaies:
Yet sprang she not from Egles nest,
But Turtle-bred, loves Turtle best.

At wester side of Albions Ile,
Where Austine pitcht his Monkish tent,
Where Sheepheards sing, where Muses smile,
The graces met with one consent,
To frame each one in sundry parte,
Some cunning worke to shew their arte.

First *Venus* fram'd a luring eye,
A sweete aspect and comly grace;
There did the Rose and Lillie lie,
That bravely deckt a smiling face,
Here Cupid's mother bent her wil,
In this to shew her utmost skill.

Then *Pallas* gave a reaching head,
With deepe conceites, and passing wit,
A setled mind, not fancie-led,
Abhorring Cupids frantique fit,
With modest lookes, and blushing cheekes,
A filed tongue which none mislikes.

Diana deckt the remnant partes,
With fewture brave, that nothing lacke,
A quiver full of pearcing Darts,
She gave her hanging at her backe;
And in her hand a Golden shaft,
To conquer Cupids creeping craft.

This done they come to take the view,
Of novell worke, of peerlesse frame;
Amongst them three, contention grew,
But yet *Diana* gave the name,
Avisa shall she called be,
The chiefe attendant still on me.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

When *Juno* view'd her luring grace,
Olde *Juno* blusht to see a new,
She fear'd least *Jove* would like this face,
And so perhaps might play untrew,
They all admir'd so sweete a sight,
They all envide so rare a wight.

When *Juno* came to give her wealth,
(Which wanting beauty, wants her life)
She cryde, this face needes not my pelffe,
Great riches sow the seedes of strife:
I doubt not some Olympian power
Will fill her lap, with Golden shower,

Beautie without riches, is as a faire picture without life.

This jealous *Juno* faintly said,
As halfe misdeeming wanton Jove,
But chast *Diana* tooke the maide,
Such new-bred qualmes quite to remove:
O jealous envie, filthie beast,
For envie *Juno* gave her least.

Jealosie breedes envy: Both together breede frenzie, yet neither of them both can prevaile against wandring fancie.

In lew of *Juno's* Golden parte
Diana gave her double grace;
A chast desire, a constant heart,
Disdaine of love in fawning face,
A face, and eye, that should intice,
A smile, that should deceive the wise.

A straunge bayte.

A sober tongue that should allure,
And draw great numbers to the fielde;
A flintie hart, that should indure
All fierce assaults, and never yeelde,
And seeming oft as though she would;
Yet fardest off when that she should.

Can filthy sinke yeelde holsome aire,
Or vertue from a vice proceede?
Can envious hart, or jealous feare
Repell the things that are decreed?
By envie though she lost her thrift,
She got by grace a better gift,

Not farre from thence there lyes a vale,
A rosie vale in pleasant plaine;
The Nimphes frequent this happie dale,
Olde Helicon revives againe;
Here Muses sing, here Satyres play,
Here mirth resounds both night and day.

At East of this, a Castle stands,
By auncient sheepheards built of olde,
And lately was in sheepheards hands,
Though now by brothers bought and solde,
  At west side springs a Christall well;
  There doth this chast *Avisa* dwell.

And there she dwels in publique eye,
Shut up from none that list to see;
She answeres all that list to try,
Both high and low of each degree:
  But few that come, but feele her dart,
  And try her well ere they depart.

They try'd her hard in hope to gaine,
Her milde behaviour breeds their hope,
Their hope assures them to obtaine,
Till having runne their witlesse scope;
  They find their vice by vertue crost,
  Their foolish words, and labour lost.

This strange effect, that all should crave,
Yet none obtaine their wrong desire,
A secret gift, that nature gave,
To feele the frost, amidst the fire:
  Blame not this Dians Nimphe too much,
  Sith God by nature made her such

Let all the graces now be glad,
That fram'd a grace that past them all,
Let *Juno* be no longer sad;
Her wanton Jove hath had a fall;
  Ten yeares have tryde this constant dame,
  And yet she holds a spotles fame.

Along this plaine there lyes a downe,
Where sheepheards feed their frisking flocke;
Her Sire the Mayor of the towne,
A lovely shout of auncient stocke,
  Full twentie yeares she lived a maide,
  And never was by man betrayde.

A good gift.

At length by *Juno's* great request,
Diana loth, yet gave her leave,
Of flowring yeares, to spend the rest,
In wed-locke band; but yet receive,
  Quod she, this gift; Thou virgin pure,
  Chast wife in wed-locke shalt indure.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

O happie man that shall enjoy
A blessing of so rare a price;
That frees the hart from such annoy;
As often doth torment the wise,
A loving wife unto her death,
With full assurance of her faith.

When flying fame began to tell,
How beauties wonder was returnd,
From countrie hils, in towne to dwell,
With special gifts and grace adornd,
Of sutors store there might you see;
And some were men of high degree.

But wisdom wild her choose her mate,
If that she lov'd a happy life,
That might be equall to her state,
To crop the sprigges of future strife;
Where rich in grace, wher sound in health,
Most men do wed, but for the wealth.

Though jealous *Juno* had denyde
This happy wench, great store of pelffe;
Yet is she now in wed-locke tyde,
To one that loves her as himselfe,
So thus they live, and thus they love;
And God doth blesse them from above.

This rare seene bird, this Phoenix sage
Yeeldes matter to my drowsie pen,
The mirror of this sinneful age,
That gives us beasts in shapes of men,
Such beasts as still continue sinne,
Where age doth leave, there youths begin.

Our English soile, to Sodoms sinke
Excessive sinne transformd of late,
Of foule deceite the lothsome linke,
Hath worne all faith cleane out of date,
The greatest sinnes mongst greatest sort,
Are counted now but for a sport.

Old Asaes grandame is restor'd;
Her grovie Caves are new refinde:
The monster Idoll is ador'd
By lustie dames of Macha's kinde: 2. Chro. 15. 16.
They may not let this worship fall,
Although they leese their honours all.

Our Moab Cozbies cast no feare,
To set in view of every eye,
Numer. 25. 6. Their gainelesse games they holde so deere,
They follow must, although they dye.
For why? The sword that Phineas wore,
Is broken now, and cuts no more.

My tender Muse, that never try'd
Her joynted wings till present time,
At first the perelesse bird espyed,
That mounts aloft, devoide of crime;
Though high she sore, yet will I trie,
Where I her passage can discry.

Her high conceites, her constant minde;
Her sober talk, her stout denies;
Her chast advise, here shall you find;
Her fierce assaults, her milde replies,
Her dayly fight with great and small,
Yet constant vertue conquers all.

The first that saies to plucke the Rose,
That scarce appear'd without the bud,
With Gorgeous shewes of Golden glose,
To sow the seeds that were not good;
Suppose it were some noble man
That tride her thus, and thus began.

The first triall of *Avisa*, before she was married, by a Noble man: under which is represented a warning to all young maids of every degree, that they beware of the alluring intisements of great men.

CANT. II

Nob.

Now is the time, if thou be wise,
Thou happie maide, if thou canst see,
Thy happiest time, take good advise,
Good fortune laughs, be rulde by me:
Be rulde by me, and here's my faith,
No Golde shall want thee till thy death.

Thou knowest my power, thou seest my might,
Thou knowest I can maintaine thee well,
And help thy friends unto their right;

Thou shalt with me for ever dwell,
My secret friend thou shalt remaine,
And all shall turne to thy great gaine.

Thou seest thy parents meane estate,
That barres the hope of greater chance;
And if thou prove not wise too late,
Thou maist thy self, and thine advance;
Repulse not fondly this good hap,
That now lies offred in thy lap.

Abandon feare that bars consent,
Repel the shame that feares a blot,
Let wisdome way what faith is ment,
That all may praise thy happie lot;
Thinke not I seeke thy lives disgrace;
For thou shalt have a Ladies place.

Thou art the first my fancie chose,
I know my friends will like it well;
This friendly fault to none disclose,
And what thou thinkst, blush not to tell,
Thou seest my love, thou know'st my mind,
Now let me feele, what grace I find.

CANT. III

AVISA

Your Honours place, your riper yeares,
Might better frame some graver talkes:
Midst sunny rayes, this cloud appears;
Sweet Roses grow on prickly stalkes:
If I conceive, what you request,
You aime at that I most detest.

My tender age that wants advice,
And craves the aide of sager guides,
Should rather learne for to be wise,
To stay my steps from slipperie slides;
Then thus to sucke, then thus to tast
The poys' ned sap, that kils at last.

I wonder what your wisdome ment,
Thus to assault a silly maide:
Some simple wench might chance consent,
By false resembling shewes betraid:
I have by grace a native shield,
To lewd assaults that cannot yeeld.

I am too base to be your wife,
You choose me for your secret frend;
That is to lead a filthy life,
Whereon attends a fearefull end;
  Though I be poore, I tell you plaine,
  To be your whore, I flat disdaine.

Your high estate, your silver shrines,
Repleate with wind and filthy stinke;
Your glittering gifts, your golden mynes,
May force some fooles perhaps to shrinke:
  But I have learnd that sweetest bayt,
  Oft shrowds the hooke of most desayt.

What great good hap, what happie time,
Your proffer brings, let yeelding maids
Of former age, which thought to clime
To highest tops of earthly aids,
  Come backe a while, and let them tell,
  Where wicked lives have ended well.

Shores wife, a Princes secret frend,
Faire *Rosamond*, a Kings delight:
Yet both have found a gastly end,
And fortunes friends, felt fortunes spight:
  What greater joyes, could fancie frame,
  Yet now we see, their lasting shame.

If princely pallace have no power,
To shade the shame of secret sinne,
If blacke reproch such names devoure,
What gaine, or glory can they winne,
  That tracing tracts of shamelesse trade,
  A hate of God, and man are made?

This only vertue must advaunce
My meane estate to joyfull blisse:
For she that swaies dame vertues launce,
Of happie state can never misse,
  But they that hope to gaine by vice,
  Shall surely prove too late unwise.

The roote of woe is fond desire,
That never feeles her selfe content:
But wanton wing'd will needes aspire,
To finde the thing, she may lament,
  A courtly state, a Ladies place,
  My former life will quite deface.

Such strange conceites may hap prevaile,
With such as love such strong desayts,
But I am taught such qualmes to quaile,
And flee such sweete alluring bayts,
  The witlesse Flie playes with the flame,
  Till she be scorched with the same.

You long to know what grace you find,
In me, perchance, more then you would,
Except you quickly change your mind,
I find in you, lesse then I should,
  Move this no more, use no reply,
  I'le keepe mine honour till I die.

CANT. IIII

Nob.

Alas, good soule, and will yee so?
You will be chast *Diana's* mate;
Till time have wove the web of woe,
Then to repent wil be too late,
  You shew yourself so foole-precise,
  That I can hardly thinke you wise.

You sprang belike from Noble stocke,
That stand so much upon your fame,
You hope to stay upon the rocke,
That will preserve a faultlesse name,
  But while you hunt for needelesse praise,
  You loose the prime of sweetest daies.

A merry time, when countrie maides
Shall stand (forsooth) upon their garde;
And dare controll the Courtiers deedes,
At honours gate that watch and warde;
  When Milkemaids shal their pleasures flie,
  And on their credits must relie.

Ah silly wench, take not a pride,
Though thou my raging fancie move,
Thy betters far, if they were try'd,
Would faine accept my proffered love;
  'Twas for thy good, if thou hadst wist,
  For I may have whome ere I list.

But here thy folly may appeare,
Art thou preciser then a Queene:
Queene *Joane* of Naples did not feare,
To quite mens love, with love againe:
And *Messalina*, t'is no newes,
Was dayly seene to haunt the stewes.

Cornelius Agrippa.

And *Cleopatra*, prince of Nile,
With more than one was wont to play:
And yet she keepes her glorious stile,
And fame that never shall decaie,
What need'st thou then to feare of shame,
When Queenes and Nobles use the same?

CANT. V

Avisa

Needs must the sheepe straye all awrie,
Whose sheepheards wander from their way:
Needes must the sickly patient die,
Whose Doctor seekes his lives decay:
Needs must the people well be taught,
Whose chiefest leaders all are naught.

Such lawlesse guides Gods people found,
When Moab maides allur'd their fall;
They sought no salve to cure this wound,
Till God commaunds, to hange them all;
For wicked life, a shamefull end
To wretched men, the Lord doth send.

Was earth consumde with wreakful waves?
Did Sodom burne and after sinke?
What sinne is that, which vengaunce craves,
If wicked lust no sinne we thinke?
O blind conceites! O filthy breath!
That drawes us headlong to our death.

If death be due to every sinne,
How can I then be too precise?
Where pleasures end, if paine beginne,
What neede have we, then to be wise?
They weave indeed the web of woe,
That from the Lord doe yeeld to goe.

I will remember whence I came,
I hunt not for this worldly praise,
I long to keepe a blamelesse fame,
And constant hart gainst hard assaies:
If this be folly, want of skill,
I will remaine thus foolish still.

The blindfold rage of Heathen Queenes,
Or rather queanes that know not God,
Gods heavie judgements tried since,
And felt the waight of angry rod;
God save me from that Sodomes crie,
Whose deadly sting shall never die,

CANT. VI

Nob.

Forgive me wench, I did mistake,
I little thought that you could preach,
All worldly joyes, you must forsake:
For so your great Divines doe teach,
But yet beware, be not too bold,
A yongling Saint, a Devill old.

Well wanton well, thou are but yong,
This is the error of thy youth,
Thou wilt repent this faith ere long,
And see too late (perhaps) the truth;
And they that seem so pure at first,
Are often found in proofe the worst.

Thy youth and beautie will not last,
For sickness one, the other age
May captive take, when both are past,
You may have leasure to be sage,
The time will come, if these retire,
The worst will scorne that I desire.

Of chast renowme, you seeke the praise,
You build your hope above the ayre,
When wonders last not twentie daies,
What need you rusticke rumors feare?
Esteeme not words above thy wealth,
Which must procure thy credits health.

And yet in truth I can not see,
From whence such great discredit growes,
To live in spight of every eye,
And swim in silkes and bravest shewes,
To take the choise of daintiest meate,
And see thy betters stand and waite.

These grave respects breede pleasures bane,
Thy youthly yeares for joyes crave,
And fading credit hath his wane,
That none to thee doth shine so brave:
That smokie fame which likes thee best,
The wisest have esteemed least.

CANT. VII

Avisa.

Well now I see, why Christ commends,
To loving mates the Serpents wit,
That stops his eares, and so defends
His hart, from luring sounds unfit,
If you your madnes still bewraye,
I'le stop my eares, or goe my way.

Ulisses wise, yet dar'd not stay
The tising sound of Syrens song:
What fancy then doth me betray,
That thinke my selfe, so wise and strong;
That dare to heare, what you dare speake,
And hope for strength, when you be weake?

My wisdome is the living Lord,
That gives me grace which nature wants,
That holds my feete from waies abhord,
And in my hart good motions plants:
With him I dare to bide the field,
Strive while you list, I can not yeeld.

Fond favour failes, the time will passe,
All earthly pleasures have their end,
We see that not, which sometime was,
Nor that which future times will send:
You say the truth, remember this,
And then confesse, you stray amisse.

The shorter time, the greater care,
Are pleasures vaine? the lesse delight,
Are daungers nye? why then beware,
From base affections take your flight,
  Thinke God a reckning will require,
  And strive to quaile this bad desire.

To swim in silkes, and brave aray,
Is that you thinke which women love,
That leads poore maides so oft astray
That are not garded from above?
  But this I know, that know not all,
  Such wicked pride, will have a fall.

CANT. VIII

Nob.

Alas the feare, alas the fall,
And what's the fall, that you so feare?
To tosse good fotunes golden ball,
And gaine the goale I prize so deare,
  I doubt least these your needlesse feares,
  Will bar good hap, from witlesse yeares.

Thy age experience wants I see,
And lacking tryall art afraid,
Least ventring farre to credit me,
Our secret dealings might be wrayd;
  What then doth not my mightie name,
  Suffice to sheeld thy fact from shame?

Who dares to stirre, who dares to speake,
Who dares our dealings to reprove?
Though some suspect, yet none will creake,
Or once controll thy worthy love;
  My might will stand for thy defence,
  And quite thee clear from great offence.

Who sees our face, knowes not our facts,
Though we our sport in secret use,
Thy cheekes will not bewray thy acts,
But rather blushing make excuse:
  If thou wilt yeeld, here is my faith,
  I'le keep it secret till my death.

To seeme as chast, let that suffice,
Although indeed thou be not so,
Thus deale our women that are wise,
And let thy godly Doctors go,
  Sitll faine as though thou godly art,
  It is inough, who knowes thy hart?

Let not the idle vulgar voice,
Of fained credit witch thee so,
To force thee leave this happie choise,
And flying pleasure live in woe;
  If thou refuse, assure my mind,
  The like of this shalt never find.

CANT. IX

Avisa

Let that word stand, let that be true,
I doe refuse and so doe still,
God shield me from your cursed crew,
That thus are led by beastly will,
  It grieves my hart, that I doe find
  In Noble bloud so base a mind,

On worldly feare, you thinke I stand,
Or fame that may my shame resound,
No Sir, I feare his mightie hand,
That will both you and me confound,
  His feare it is that makes me stay
  My wandring steps from wicked way.

Who dares, say you, our facts unfold?
Ev'n he that can mightie Kings tame,
And he that Princes hath controld,
He dares provide a mightie shame,
  What fence have you for to withstand
  His firie plagues, and hevie hand?

Though *Samson* queld the Lyons rage
Though *Solomon*, a mightie King,
Yet when to sinne their harts they gage,
On both doth God confusion bring,
  How can you then his wrath avoid,
  That you and yours be not destroid?

He sees our facts, he viewes our deeds,
Although we sinne in secret place,
A guiltie conscience alwaies bleeds:
My faults will shew upon my face,
  My cheekes will blush, when I doe sin;
  Let all men know, when I begin.

To seeme as chast, and not to be,
To beare a shew, and yet to faine,
Is this the love, you beare to me,
To damne my soule in lasting paine?
  If this the best you have to say,
  Pray give me leave, to goe my way.

CANT. X

Nob.

Well then I see, you have decreed,
And this decree must light on mee:
Unhappie Lillie loves a weed,
That gives no sent, that yeelds no glee,
  Thou art the first I ever tride,
  Shall I at first be thus denide?

My haplesse hap, fell much awrie,
To fix my fancies prime delight
In haggard Hauke that mounts so hie,
That checkes the lure, and Fawkners sight;
  But sore you hie, or flie you low,
  Stoupe needs you must, before you goe.

Your modest speech is not amisse,
Your maidens blush becomes you well;
Now will I see how sweete you kisse,
And so my purpose farder tell;
  Your coye lookes and trickes are vaine
  I will no nay, and that is plaine.

Thou must perforce be well content,
To let me win thee with thy will;
Thy chiefest friends have giv'n consent,
And therefore thinke, it is not ill,
  Abandon all thy fond delay,
  And marke this well, that I shall say.

My house, my hart, my land my life
My credit to thy care I give:
And if thou list to be a wife,
In shew of honest fame to live;
  I'le fit thee one, shall beare the cloke,
  And be a chimnie for the smoke.

But say the word it shall be don,
And what thou list, or what thou crave,
What so be lost, what ever won,
Shall nothing want, that thou wilt have,
  Thou shalt have all, what wilt thou more,
  Which never woman had before.

Here's fortie Angels to begin;
A little pledge of great goodwill,
To buy thee lace, to buy a pin;
I will be carefull of thee still:
  If youth be quaild, if I be old,
  I can supply that with my gold.

Silke gownes and velvet shalt thou have,
With hoods, and cauls fit for thy head;
Of goldsmithes worke a border brave,
A chaine of golde ten double spread
  And all the rest shall answere this,
  My purse shall see that nothing misse.

Two wayting maides, attendant still,
Two serving men, foure geldings prest,
Go where you list, ride where you will,
No jealous thought shal me molest;
  Two hundreth pounds I doe intend,
  To give thee yearely for to spend.

Of this I will assurance make,
To some good friend, whom thou wilt chuse
That this in trust from me shall take,
While thou dost live, unto thy use;
  A thousand markes, to thee give I
  And all my Jewels when I die.

This will I doe, what ever chance,
I'le shortly send, and fetch thee hence;
Thy chiefest friends I will advance,
And leave them cause of no offence,
  For all this fame, I onely crave
  But thy good will, that let me have.

A modest maide is loth to say,
In open words, she doth consent,
Till gentle force doe breake the stay,
Come on, mine owne, and be content,
  Possesse me of my loves desire,
  And let me tast that I require.

CANT. XI

AVISA

Hand off my Lord, this will not serve,
Your wisdom wanders much awrie,
From reasons rule, thus farre to swarve,
I'le never yeeld, I'le rather die,
  Except you leave and so depart,
  This knife shall sticke within your hart.

Is this the love, your franticke fit
Did so pretend in glosing shew?
Are these your waies, is this your wit,
To tice and force poore maidens so?
  You strive in vaine, by raging lust
  To gaine consent, or make me trust.

For who can trust your flattering stile,
Your painted words, your brave pretence,
When you will strive, by trayned wile
To force consent to lewd offence,
  Then thus to yeeld by chaunted charmes,
  I'le rather die within your armes.

Your golden Angels I repell,
Your lawlesse lust I here defie
These Angels are the posts of hell,
That often lead poore souls awrie,
  Shame on them all, your eyes shall see,
  These Angels have no power of me.

Your gownes of silke, your golden chaines,
Your men, your maides, your hundreth pounds,
Are nothing else but divelish traines,
That fill fond eares with tickling sounds,
  A bladder full of traiterous wind,
  And fardest off from honest mind.

Well, sith your meaning now is plaine,
And lust would give no longer leave,
To faithlesse hart, to lie and faine,
Which might perchance in time deceive,
By Jesus Christ I doe protest,
I'le never graunt that you request.

CANT. XII

Nob. Furens

Thou beggers brat, thou dunghill mate,
Thou clownish spawne, thou country gill,
My love is turnd to wreakefull hate,
Go hang, and keepe thy credit still,
Gad where thou list, aright or wrong,
I hope to see thee begge, erre long.

Was this great offer well refus'd,
Or was this proffer all too base?
Am I fit man to be abus'd,
With such disgrace, by flattering gase?
On thee or thine, as I am man,
I will revenge this if I can.

Thou think'st thy selfe a peerelesse prize,
And peevish pride that doth possesse
Thy hart; perswades that thou art wise,
When God doth know ther's nothing lesse,
T'was not thy beautie that did move
This fond affect, but blinded love.

I hope to see some countrie clowne,
Possessor of that fleering face,
When need shall force thy pride come downe,
I'le laugh to see thy foolish case,
For thou that think'st thy selfe so brave,
Wilt take at last some paltrie knave.

Thou selfewill gig that doth detest
My faithfull love, looke to thy fame,
If thou offend, I doe protest,
I'le bring thee out to open shame,
For sith thou fayn'st thy selfe so pure,
Looke to thy leapes that they be sure.

I was thy friend, but now thy foe,
Thou hadst my hart, but now my hate,
Refusing wealth, God send thee woe,
Repentance now will come too late,
That tongue that did protest my faith,
Shall waile thy pride, and wish thy death.

CANT. XIII

AVISA

Yea so I thought, this is the end
Of wandring lust, resembling love,
Wa'st love or lust, that did intend
Such friendlesse force, as you did move?
Though you may vaunt of happier fate,
I am content with my estate.

I rather chuse a quiet mind,
A conscience cleare from bloudy sinnes,
Then short delights, and therein find
That gnawing worm that never linnes,
Your bitter speeches please me more,
Then all your wealth, and all your store.

I love to live devoid of crime,
Although I begge, although I pine,
These fading joyes for little time,
Imbrace who list, I here resine,
How poore I goe, how meane I fare,
If God be pleas'd, I doe not care.

I rather beare your raging ire,
Although you sweare revengment deepe,
Then yeeld for gaine to lewd desire,
That you might laugh, when I should weepe,
Your lust would like but for a space,
But who could salve my foule disgrace?

Mine eares have heard your taunting words,
Of yeelding fooles by you betraid,
Amongst your mates at open bords,
Know'st such a wife? know'st such a maid?
Then must you laugh, then must you winke,
And leave the rest for them to thinke.

Nay yet welfare the happie life,
That need not blush at every view:
Although I be a poore mans wife,
Yet then I'le laugh as well as you,
  Then laugh as long, as you thinke best,
  My fact shall frame you no such jest.

If I do hap to leape aside,
I must not come to you for aide,
Alas now that you be denide,
You thinke to make me sore afraide;
  Nay watch your worst, I doe not care,
  If I offend, pray doe not spare.

You were my friend, you were but dust,
The Lord is he, whome I doe love,
He hath my hart, in him I trust,
And he doth gard me from above,
  I waie not death, I feare not hell,
  This is enough, and so farewell.

THE SECOND TEMPTATION OF AVISA

after her marriage by Ruffians, Roysters, young Gentlemen, and lustie Captaines, which all she quickly cuts off

CANT. XIIII

CAVELEIRO

Come lustie wench, I like thy lookes,
And such a pleasant looke I love,
Thine eyes are like to bayted hookes,
That force the hungrie fish to move,
  Where nature granteth such a face,
  I need not doubt to purchase grace.

I doubt not but thy inward thought,
Doth yeeld as fast as doth thine eye;
A love in me hath fancie wrought,
Which worke you can not well denye;
  From love you can not me refraine,
  I seeke but this, love me againe.

And so thou dost, I know it well,
I knew it by thy side-cast glance,
Can hart from outward looke rebell?
Which yeaster night I spide by chance;
  Thy love (sweete hart) shall not be lost,
  How deare a price so ever it cost.

Aske what thou wilt, thou know'st my mind,
Appoint the place, and I will come,
Appoint the time, and thou shalt find,
Thou canst not fare so well at home,
  Few words suffice, where harts consent,
  I hope thou know'st, and art content.

Though I a stranger seeme as yet,
And seldome seene, before this day,
Assure thy selfe that thou mayst get,
More knackes by me, then I will say,
  Such store of wealth as I will bring,
  Shall make thee leape, shal make thee sing.

I must be gone, use no delay,
At six or seven the chance may rise,
Old gamesters know their vantage play,
And when t'is best to cast the dice,
  Leave ope your poynt, take up your man,
  And mine shall quickly enter than.

CANT. XV

Avisa

What now? what newes? new warres in hand?
More trumpets blowne of fond conceites?
More banners spread of follies band?
New Captaines coyning new deceites?
  Ah woe is me, new campes are pla'st,
  Whereas I thought all daungers past.

O wretched soule, what face have I,
That can not looke, but some misdeame?
What sprite doth lurke within mine eye,
That kendles thoughts so much uncleane?
  O lucklesse fewture never blest,
  That sow'st the seedes of such unrest.

What wandring fits are these that move
Your hart, inragde with every glance;
That judge a woman straight in love,
That welds her eye aside by chance,
  If this your hope, by fancie wrought,
  You hope on that I never thought.

If nature give me such a looke,
Which seemes at first unchast or ill,
Yet shall it prove no bayted hooke,
To draw your lust to wanton will,
  My face and will doe not agree,
  Which you in time (perhaps) may see.

If smiling cheare and friendly words,
If pleasant talke such thoughts procure,
Yet know my hart, no will afords,
To scratching kites, to cast the lure,
  If milde behavior thus offend,
  I will assaie this fault to mend.

You plant your hope upon the sand,
That build on womens words, or smiles;
For when you thinke your selfe to stand
In greatest grace, they prove but wyles,
  When fixt you thinke on surest ground,
  Then fardest off they will be found.

CANT. XVI

AVISA

You speake of love, you talke of cost,
Is't filthy love your worship meanes?
Assure your selfe your labor's lost;
Bestow your cost among your queanes,
  You left not here, nor here shall find,
  Such mates as match your beastly mind.

You must again to Coleman hedge,
For there be some that looke for gaine,
They will bestow the French mans badge,
In lew of all your cost and paine,
  But Sir, it is against my use,
  For gaine to make my house a stewes.

What have you seene, what have I doon
That you should judge my mind so light,
That I so quickly might be woon,
Of one that came but yeaster night?
  Of one I wist not whence he came,
  Nor what he is, nor what's his name?

Though face doe friendly smile on all
Yet judge me not to be so kind,
To come at every Faulkners call,
Or wave aloft with every wind,
  And you that venter thus to try,
  Shall find how far you shoote awry.

. . . . . .

You may be walking when you list,
Looke ther's the doore, and ther's the way,
I hope you have your market mist,
Your game is lost, for lacke of play,
The point is close, no chance can fall,
That enters there, or ever shall.

CANT. XVII

Caveleiro

A right Caveleiro.

Gods wo: I thinke you doe but jest,
You can not thus delude my hope:
But yet perhaps you thinke it best,
At first to give but little scope:
At first assault you must retire,
And then be forst to yeeld desire.

You thinke, that I would judge you bad,
If you should yeeld at first assaie,
And you may thinke me worse then mad,
If on[e] repulse send me awaie,
You thinke you doe your credit wrong,
Except you keepe your sutors long.

But I that know the wonted guise,
Of such as live in such a place,
Old dame experience makes me wise,
To know your meaning by your face,
For most of them, that seeme so chast,
Denie at first, and take at last.

This painted sheth, may please some foole,
That can not see the rustie knife:
But I have been too long at schooles,
To think you of so pure a life,
The time and place will not permit,
That you can long, here spot-lesse sit.

And therefore wench, be not so strange,
To grant me that, which others have,
I know that women love to change,
T'is but deceite, to seeme so grave,
I never have that woman tri'd,
Of whome as yet I was deni'd.

Your godly zeale doth breed my trust,
Your anger makes me hope the more;
For they are often found the worst,
That of their conscience make such store,
  In vaine to blush, or looke aside,
  A flat repulse, I can not bide.

CANT. XVIII

AVISA

Thou wicked wretch, what dost not thinke
There is a God that doth behold
This sinnefull waies, this Sodom's sinke?
O wretched earth that art so bold,
  To jest at God, and at his word,
  Looke for his just revenging sword.

Saint Paul commands us not to eate,
With him that leads a wicked life;
Or shall be found to lie in waite,
To seek to spoyle his neighbours wife,
  Such wicked soules God doth forsake,
  And dings them downe to fierie lake.

1. Cor. 5.

Revela. 12.

A brain-sicke youth was striken blind,
That sent his greedie eye to view,
A godly wench, with godlesse mind,
That paine might spring, whence pleasures grew,
  Remember friend, forget not this,
  And see you looke no more amisse.

A young man was striken blind for looking dishonestly upon a godly woman

O *Julia* flower of thy time,
Where is thy law, where is thy word,
That did condemne the wedlocke crime,
To present death, with bloudy sword?
  The shining of this percing edge,
  Would daunt the force of filthy rage.

The Locrenses used to put out both the eyes of the adulterers.

The law Julia in Rome put adulterers to the sword.

. . . . . .

The Arabians doe the like.

The time and place may not condemne,
The mind to vice that doth not sway,
But they that vertue doe contemne,
By time and place, are led astray,
  This place doth hold on at this time,
  That will not yeeld to bloudy crime.

You thinke that others have possest
The place that you so lewdly crave,
Wherein you plainely have confest,
Your selfe to be a jealous knave,
  The rose unblusht hath yet no staine,
  Nor ever shall, while I remaine.

CANT. XIX

Caveleiro

Me thinkes I heare a sober Fox,
Stand preaching to the gagling Geese;
And shewes them out a painted box,
And bids them all beware of cheese,
  Your painted box, and goodly preach,
  I see doth hold a foxly reach.

Perchance you be no common card,
But love the daintie diamonds place,
The ten, the knave, may be your gard,
Yet onely you, are still the ace,
  Contented close in packe to lie,
  But open dealing you defie.

Well, I confesse, I did offend,
To rush so headlong to the marke;
Yet give me leave this fault to mend,
And crave your pardon in the darke,
  Your credits fame I will not spill,
  But come as secret as you will.

Nay her's my hand, my faith I give,
My tongue my fact shall not reveale,
To earthly creature while I live;
Because you love a secret deale,
  And where I come, I still will say,
  She would not yeeld, but said me nay.

So shall your credit greater grow,
By my report and passing praise
And they that scant your name doe know,
Your fame on hie, and hie shall raise,
  So shall you gaine that you desire,
  By granting that, which I require.

To plant a siege, and yet depart,
Before the towne be yeelded quite,
It kils a martiall manly hart,
That can not brooke such high despite,
Then say you yea, or say you no,
I'le scale your wals, before I go.

CANT. XX

Avisa

A fine device, and well contriv'd,
Brave Golde upon a bitter pill;
No marvaile well though you have thriv'd
That so can decke, that so can dill;
Your quaintish quirkes can want no mate;
But here I wis, you come too late.

It's ill to hault before the lame,
Or watch the bird that can not sleepe,
Your new found trickes are out of frame,
The fox will laugh, when Asses weepe;
Sweare what you list, say what you will,
Before you spake, I knew your skill.

Your secret dealing will not hold,
To force me trie, or make me trust
Your blind devises are too old,
Your broken blade hath got the rust,
You need not lie, but truely say,
She would not yeeld to wanton play.

Your tongue shall spare to spread my fame,
I list not buy too deare a sound,
Your greatest praise would breed but shame,
Report of me as you have found,
Though you be loth to blow retreat,
This mount's too strong for you to get.

The wisest Captaine now and then,
When that he feeles his foe too strong;
Retires betime to save his men,
That grow but weake, if seege be long;
From this assault you may retire,
You shall not reach, that you require.

I hate to feede you with delaies,
As others doe, that meane to yeeld,
You spend in vaine your strong assaies,
To win the town, or gaine the feeld;
No Captaine did, nor ever shall,
Set ladder here, to skale the wall.

CANT. XXI

Caveleiro

Had I knowne this when I began,
You would have usde me as you say,
I would have tooke you napping than,
Nor give you leave to say me nay,
I little thought to find you so:
I never dreamt, you would say no.

Such selfe like wench I never met,
Great cause have I thus hard to crave it,
If ever man have had it yet,
I sworen have, that I will have it.
If thou didst never give consent,
I must perforce, be then content.

If thou wilt sweare, that thou hast knowne,
In carnall act, no other man:
But onely one, and he thine owne,
Since man and wife you first began,
I 'le leave my sute, and sweare it trew,
Thy like in deed, I never knew.

CANT. XXII

Avisa

I told you first what you should find,
Although you thought I did but jest.
And selfe affection made you blind,
To seeke the thing, I most detest;
Besides his host, who takes the paine,
To recken first, must count againe.

Your rash swore oth you must repent,
You must beware of headlong vowes;
Excepting him, whome free consent,
By wedlocke words, hath made my spouse,
From others yet I am as free,
As they this night, that boren bee.

CAVELEIRO

Well give me then a cup of wine,
As thou art his, would thou wert mine.

AVISA

Have t'ye good-lucke, tell them that gave
You this advice, what speede you have.

. . . . . .

CANT. XLIIII

Henrico Willobego. Italo-Hispalensis

H. W. being sodenly affected with the contagion of a fantasticall fit, at the first sight of A, pyneth a while in secret griefe, at length not able any longer to indure the burning heate of so fervent a humour, bewrayeth the secresy of his disease unto his familiar frend W. S. who not long before had tryed the curtesy of the like passion, and was now newly recovered of the like infection; yet finding his frend let bloud in the same vaine, he took pleasure for a tyme to see him bleed, & in steed of stopping the issue, he inlargeth the wound, with the sharpe rasor of a willing conceit, perswading him that he thought it a matter very easy to be compassed, & no doubt with payne, diligence & some cost in tyme to be obtayned. Thus this miserable comforter comforting his frend with an impossibilitie, eyther for that he now would secretly laugh at his frends folly, that had given occasion not long before unto others to laugh at his owne, or because he would see whether an other could play his part better then himselfe, & in vewing a far off the course of this loving Comedy, he determined to see whether it would sort to a happier end for this new actor, then it did for the old player. But at length this Comedy was like to have growen to a Tragedy, by the weake and feeble estate that H.W. was brought unto, by a desperate vewe of an impossibility of obtaining his purpose, til Time & Necessity, being his best Phisitions brought him a plaster, if not to heale, yet in part to ease his maladye. In all which discourse is lively represented the unrewly rage of unbrydeled fancy, having the raines to rove at liberty, with the dyvers & sundry changes of affections & temptations, which Will, set loose from Reason, can devise, &c.

H.W.

H. W.

What sodaine chance or change is this,
That doth bereave my quyet rest?
What surly cloud eclipst my blisse,
What sprite doth rage within my brest?
Such fainty qualmes I never found,
Till first I saw this westerne ground.

Can change of ayre complexions change,
And strike the sences out of frame?
Though this be true, yet this is strange,
Sith I so lately hither came:
And yet in body cannot find
So great a change as in my mynd.

My lustlesse limmes do pyne away,
Because my heart is dead within,
All lively heat I feele decay,
And deadly cold his roome doth win,
My humors all are out of frame,
I frize amid'st the burning flame.

I have the feaver Heckticke right,
I burne within, consume without,
And having melted all my might,
Then followes death, without all doubt:
O fearefull foole, that know my greefe,
Yet sew and seeke for no releefe.

I know the tyme, I know the place,
Both when and where my eye did vew
That novell shape, that frendly face,
That so doth make my hart to rew,
O happy tyme if she inclyne,
If not, woe worth theese lucklesse eyne.

I love the seat where she did sit,
I kisse the grasse, where she did tread,
Me thinkes I see that face as yet,
And eye, that all these turmoyles breed,
I envie that this seat, this ground,
Such frendly grace and favour found.

I dream't of late, God grant that dreame
Protend my good, that she did meete
Me in this greene by yonder streame,

And smyling did me frendly greete:
Where wandring dreames be just or wrong,
I mind to try ere it be long.

But yonder comes my faythfull frend,
That like assaultes hath often tryde,
On his advise, I will depend
Where I shall winne, or be denyde,
And looke what counsell he shall give,
That will I do, where dye or live.

CANT. XLV

W. S.

Well met, frend Harry, what's the cause
You looke so pale with Lented cheeks?
Your wanny face and sharpened nose
Shew plaine, your mind some thing mislikes,
If you will tell me what it is,
Ile helpe to mend what is amisse.

What is she, man, that workes thy woe,
And thus thy tickling fancy move?
Thy drousie eyes, & sighes do shoe
This new disease proceedes of love,
Tell what she is that witch't thee so,
I sweare it shall no farder go.

A heavy burden wearieth one,
Which being parted then in twaine,
Seemes very light, or rather none,
And boren well with little paine:
The smothered flame, too closely pent,
Burnes more extreame for want of vent.

So sorrowes shrynde in secret brest,
Attainte the hart with hotter rage,
Then griefes that are to frendes exprest,
Whose comfort may some part asswage:
If I a frend, whose faith is tryde,
Let this request not be denyde.

Excessive griefes good counsells want,
And cloud the sence from sharpe conceits;
No reason rules, where sorrowes plant,
And folly feedes, where fury fretes,
Tell what she is, and you shall see,
What hope and help shall come from mee.

CANT. XLVI

H. W.

Seest yonder howse, where hanges the badge
Of Englands Saint, when captaines cry
Victorious land, to conquering rage,
Loe, there my hopelesse helpe doth ly:
And there that frendly foe doth dwell,
That makes my hart thus rage and swell.

CANT. XLVII

W. S.

Well, say no more: I know thy griefe,
And face from whence these flames aryse,
It is not hard to fynd reliefe
If thou wilt follow good advyse:
She is no Saynt, She is no Nonne,
I thinke in tyme she may be wonne.

Ars veteratoria

At first repulse you must not faint,
Nor flye the field though she deny
You twise or thrise, yet manly bent,
Againe, you must, and still, reply:
When tyme permits you not to talke.
Then let your pen and fingers walke.

Munera (crede mihi) placant hominesq: Deosq:

Apply her still with dyvers thinges,
(For giftes the wysest will deceave)
Sometymes with gold, sometymes with ringes,
No tyme nor fit occasion leave,
Though coy at first she seeme and wielde,
These toyes in tyme will make her yielde,

Looke what she likes; that you must love,
And what she hates, you must detest,
Where good or bad, you must approve,
The wordes and workes that please her best:
If she be godly, you must sweare,
That to offend you stand in feare.

Wicked wiles to deceave witles women.

You must commend her loving face,
For women joy in beauties praise.
You must admire her sober grace,
Her wisdome and her vertuous wayes,
Say, t'was her wit & modest shoe,
That made you like and love her so.

You must be secret, constant, free,
Your silent sighes & trickling teares,
Let her in secret often see,
Then wring her hand, as one that feares
To speake, then wish she were your wife,
And last desire her save your life.

When she doth laugh, you must be glad,
And watch occasions, tyme and place,
When she doth frowne, you must be sad,
Let sighes and sobbes request her grace:
Sweare that your love is trulyment,
So she in tyme must needes relent.

CANT. XLVIII

H. W.

The whole to sicke good counsel give,
Which they themselves cannot performe,
Your wordes do promise sweet reliefe,
To save my ship from drowning storme:
But hope is past, and health is spent,
For why my mynd is *Mal-content.*

The flowering hearbes, the pleasant spring,
That deckes the fieldes with vernant hew,
The harmelesse birdes, that sweetly sing,
My hidden griefes, do still renew;
The joyes that others long to see,
Is it that most tormenteth mee.

To dispaire of good successe in the beginning of any action, is alwayes a secret & most certaine forewarning of ill successe, that indeed doth often follow.

I greatly doubt, though March be past,
Where I shall see that wished May,
That can recure that baleful blast,
Whose cold despaire wrought my decay;
My hopelesse cloudes, that never cleere,
Presage great sorrowes very neere.

I mirth did once, and musicke love,
Which both as now, I greatly hate:
What uncouth sprite my hart doth move,
To loath the thing, I lov'd so late?
My greatest ease in deepest mone,
Is when I walke my selfe alone.

Where thinking on my hopelesse hap,
My trickling teares, like rivers flow,
Yet fancy lulles me in her lap,
And telles me, lyfe from death shall grow:
Thus flattering hope makes me believe;
My griefe in tyme shall feele relieve.

Audaces for tuna juvat, timidosq: re pellit.

Good fortune helpes the ventering wight,
That hard attempts dare undertake:
But they that shun the doubtful fight,
As coward drudges, doth forsake:
Come what there will, I meane to try,
Wher winne, or lose, I can but dye.

CANT. XLIX

H. W. the first assault

Pardon (sweet wench) my fancies fault,
If I offend to show my smart,
Your face hath made such fierce assault,
And battred so my fencelesse hart:
That of my foe, my lyfe to save,
For grace I am constrained to crave.

The raging Lyon never rendes
The yeelding pray, that prostrate lyes,
No valiant captayne ever bendes
His force against surrendering cryes:
Here I surrender roome and right,
And yeeld the fort at captaines sight.

You are the chieftaine, that have layd
This heavie siege to strengthlesse fort,
And fancy, that my will betrayd,
Hath lent dispaire his strongest port:
You glauncing eyes as Cannon shot,
Have pearst my hart, and freedome got.

When first I saw that frendly face,
Though never seen before that day,
That wit, that talke, that sober grace,
In secret hart thus did I say:
God prosper this, for this is she,
That joy or woe must bring to me.

A thousand fewtures I have seene,
For Travelers change, & choice shall see
In Fraunce, in Flaunders, & in Spaine,
Yet none, nor none could conquere mee;
  Till now I saw this face of thyne,
  That makes my wittes are none of myne.

I often said, yet there is one,
But where, or what I could not tell,
Whose sight my sence would over come,
I feard it still, I knew it well,
  And now I know your are the She,
  That was ordaind to vanquish me.

CANT. L

AVISA

What song is this that you do sing,
What tale is this that you do tell,
What newes is this that you do bring,
Or what you meane, I know not well?
  If you will speake, pray speake it playne,
  Lest els perhaps you lose your payne.

My mynd surpris'd with household cares
Tendes not darke riddles to untwyne.
My state surcharg'd with great affares,
To Idle talke can lend no tyme;
  For if your speeches tend to love,
  Your tonge in vaine such sutes will move.

In greenest grasse the winding snake,
With poysoned sting is soonest found,
A cowardes tongue makes greatest cracke,
The emptiest caske yeelds greatest sound,
  To hidden hurt, the bird to bring,
  The fouler doth most sweetly sing,

If wandering rages have possest
Your roving mynd at randame bent;
If idle qualmes from too much rest,
Fond fancyes to your lust have sent:
  Cut off the cause that breedes your smart.
  Then will your sicknesse soone depart.

Idlenesse the mother of all foolish wannesse. David being idle fell to strange lust. *Quæritur Egistus, quare sit factus Adulter*

In promptu causa est: Desidiosus erat.
Noblemen gentlemen, and Captaynes by idlenesse fall to all kynd of vices.

The restles mynd that reason wantes,
Is like the ship that lackes a sterne,
The hart beset with follyes plantes,
At wisdomes lore repynes to learne:
Some seeke and fynd what fancy list,
But after wish that they had mist.

Who loves to tread unknowen pathes,
Doth often wander from his way,
Who longes to lave in bravest bathes,
Doth wash by night, and wast by day:
Take heed betyme, beware the pryse
Of wicked lust, if you be wyse.

CANT. LI

H. W.

Unwonted lyking breedes my love,
And love the welspring of my griefe,
This fancy fixt none can remove,
None send redresse, none give reliefe,
But onely you, whose onely sight
Hath fors't me to this pyning plight.

Love oft doth spring from due desart,
As loving cause of true effect,
But myne proceeds from wounded hart,
As scholler to a novell sect:
I bare that lyking, few have bore,
I love, that never lov'd before.

I love, though doubtfull of successe,
As blindmen grope to try the way;
Yet still I love because I gesse,
You love, for love cannot denay,
Except you spring of savadge kynd,
Whome no desartes, nor love can bynd.

Of all the graces that excell,
And vertues that are cheefly best,
A constant love doth beare the bell,
And makes his owner ever blest:
How blame you then the faithfull love
That hath his praise from God above.

Can you withstand what fates ordayne?
Can you reprove dame Natures frame?
Where natures joyne, shall will disclaime?
Acquite my love, beare they the blame,
  That snuffe at faith, & looke so coy,
  And count true love but for a toy.

If fortune say it shal be so,
Then though you lyke, yet shall you yeeld,
Say what you list, you cannot go
Unconquered thus from Cupids field,
  That love that none could ever have,
  I give to you, and yours I crave.

CANT. LII

AVISA

Well, you are bent I see, to try
The utmost list of follies race,
Your fancy hath no power to fly
The luring baite of flattering grace,
  The fish that leapes & never lookes,
  Fyndes death unwares in secret hookes.

You say you love, yet shew no cause,
Of this your love, or rather lust,
Or whence this new affection groes
Which though untryde, yet we must trust,
  Dry reeds that quickly yeeld to burne,
  Soone out to flamelesse cinders turne.

Such raging love in rangling mates,
Is quickly found, and sooner lost;
Such deepe deceate in all estates,
That spares no care, no payne nor cost;
  With flattering tongues, & golden giftes,
  To dryve poore women to their shiftes.

Examine well, & you shall see
Your truthlesse treason, tearmed love,
What cause have you to fancy mee,
That never yet had tyme to prove,
  What I have beene, nor what I am,
  Where worthie love, or rather shame?

This love that you to straungers bare,
Is like to headstrong horse and mule,
That ful-fed nyes on every mare,
Whose lust outleapes the lawfull rule,
For here is seene your constant love,
Whome strange aspects so quickly move.

Besides you know I am a wife,
Not free, but bound by plighted oath,
Can love remaine, where filthy life
Hath staind the soile, where vertue gro'th?
Can love indure, where faith is fled?
Can Roses spring, whose roote is dead?

True love is constant in her choise,
But if I yeeld to chuse againe,
Then may you say with open voice,
This is her use, this is her vaine,
She yeelds to all: how can you than
Love her that yeeldes to every man?

CANT. LIII

H. W.

If fear and sorrow sharpe the wit,
And tip the tongue with sweeter grace,
Then will & style, must finely fit,
To paint my griefe, and waile my case,
Sith my true love is counted lust:
And hope is rackt in spitefull dust.

The cause that made me love so soone,
And feedes my mind with inward smart,
Springes not from Starres, nor yet the Moone,
But closly lies in secret hart:
And if you aske, I can not tell,
Nor why, nor how, this hap befell.

If birth or beautie could have wrought,
In lustlesse hart this loves effect,
Some fairer farre my love have sought,
Whose loving lookes I did reject.
If now I yeeld without assault,
Count this my fortune or my fault.

You are a wife, and you have swore,
You will be true. Yet what of this?
Did never wife play false before,
Nor for her pleasure strike amis?
  Will you alone be constant still,
  When none are chast, nor ever will?

A man or women first may chuse
The love that they may after loth;
W[h]o can denie but such may use
A second choice, to pleasure both?
  No fault to change the old for new;
  So to the second they be trew.

Your husband is a worthlesse thing,
That no way can content your mind,
That no way can that pleasure bring,
Your flowring yeares desire to find:
  This I will count my chiefest blisse,
  If I obtaine, that others misse.

Ther's nothing gotten to be coye,
The purer stampe you must detest,
Now is your time of greatest joye,
Then love the friend that loves you best,
  This I will count my chiefest blisse
  If I obtaine that others misse.

CANT. LIIII

AVISA

That others misse, you would obtaine,
And want of this doth make you sad,
I sorrow that you take such paine,
To seeke for that, will not be had,
  Your filed skill the power doth want,
  Within this plot such trees to plant.

Though some there be, that have done ill,
And for their fancie broke their faith:
Yet doe not thinke that others will,
That feare of shame more then of death:
  A spotlesse name is more to me,
  Then wealth, then friends, then life can be.

Are all unconstant, all unsound?
Will none performe their sworen vow?
Yet shall you say, that you have found,
A chast, and constant wife I trow:
And you shall see, when all is doone,
Where all will yeeld, and all be woone.

Though you have bin at common schoole,
And enterd plaints in common place;
Yet you wil prove your selfe a foole,
To judge all women void of grace:
I doubt not but you will be brought,
Soone to repent this wicked thought.

Your second change let them alow,
That list mislike their primer choice,
I lov'd him first, I love him now,
To whom I gave my yeelding voice,
My faith and love, I will not give
To mortall man, while he doth live.

What love is this, that bids me hate,
The man whom nature bids me love?
What love is this, that sets debate,
Twixt man and wife? but here I prove:
Though sm[o]othed words seeme very kind,
Yet all proceed from devilish mind.

CANT. LV

H. W.

From devilish mind? well wanton well,
You thinke your strength is very sure,
You thinke all women to excell,
And all temptations to indure.
These glorious braggs shew but your pride:
For all will yeeld, if they be tride.

You are (I hope) as others bee,
A woman made of flesh and blood,
Amongst them all, will you goe free,
When all are ill, will you be good?
Assure your selfe, I do not faine,
Requite my love with love againe.

Let me be hangd if you be such,
As you pretend in outward shoe;
Yet I commend your wisdome much,
Which mov'd me first to love you so:
  Where men no outward shewes detect,
  Suspicious minds can nil suspect.

But to the matter; tell me true,
Where you your fancie can incline,
To yeeld your love, for which I sue,
As fortune hath intangled mine:
  For well I know, it's nothing good,
  To strive against the raging flood.

What you mislike, I will amend,
If yeares I want, why I will stay,
My goods and life here I will spend,
And helpe you still in what I may:
  For though I seeme a headlong youth,
  Let time be triall of my truth.

Your name by me shall not be crackt,
But let this tongue from out my jawes,
Be rent, and bones to peeces rackt,
If I your secrets doe disclose,
  Take good advisement what you say,
  This is my good, or dismall day.

CANT. LVI

AVISA

Yes, so I will, you may be bold,
Nor will I use such strange delaies;
But that you shall be quickly told,
How you shall frame your wandring waies:
  If you will follow mine advise,
  Doubt not but you shall soone be wise.

To love, excepting honest love,
I can not yeeld, assure you mind;
Then leave this frutelesse sute to move,
Least like to *Sysyphus* you find,
  With endlesse labour, gainelesse paine,
  To role the stone that turnes againe.

You want no yeares, but rather wit,
And dew forecast in that you seeke,
To make your choice that best may fit,
And this is most that I mislieke;
If you be free, live where you list,
But still beware of, Had I wist.

Serve God, and call to him for grace,
That he may stay your slipperie slides,
From treading out that sinfull trace,
That leades where endlesse sorrowe bides,
Thus shall you wisely guide your feete;
Though youth and wisedome seldome meete

And if you find, you have no gift,
To live a chast and matelesse life,
Yet feare to use unlawfull shift,
But marry with some honest wife,
With whom you may contented live,
And wandring mind from folly drive.

Fugg, quel pi acer presente che ti da dolor futuro.

Fly present pleasure that doth bring
Insuing sorrow, paine and griefe;
Of death beware the poys'ned sting,
That hatcheth horror sance reliefe,
Take this of me, and in the end
I shall be thought your chiefest frend.

CANT. LVII

H. W.

If then the welspring of my joy,
A floud of woe, in fine become,
If love engender loves annoy,
Then farewell life, my glasse is runne;
If you thus constant still remaine;
Then must I die, or live in paine.

Thrice happie they, whose joyned harts,
United wils have linckt in one,
Whose eies discerne the due desarts,
The griping griefe, and grievous grone,
That faith doth breed in setled mind,
As fancies are by fates inclined.

And shall I role the restlesse stone?
And must I prove the endlesse paine?
In curelesse care shall I alone,
Consume with griefe, that yeelds noe gaine?
If so I curse these eies of mine,
That first beheld that face of thine.

Your will must with my woe dispence,
Your face the founder of my smart,
That pleasant looke fram'd this offence,
These thrilling gripes that gall my hart,
Sith you this wound, and hurt did give,
You must consent to yeeld relieve.

How can I cease, while fancie guides
The restlesse raines of my desire?
Can reason rule, where folly bides?
Can wit inthrald to will retire?
I little thought I should have mist,
I never feard of, Had I wist.

Let old men pray, let setled heads
Inthrall their necks to wedlocke band,
Shrewd golden gyves, who ever weds
With pleasant paine, shall take in hand:
But I will be your faithful frend,
If health by hope you yeeld to send.

CANT. LVIII

AVISA

What filthy folly, raging lust,
What beastly blindnes fancy breedes?
As though the Lord had not accurst,
With vengeance due, the sinfull deeds?
Though vaine-led youth with pleasure swell,
Yet marke these words that I shall tell.

Who so with filthy pleasure burnes;
His sinfull flesh with fierie flakes
Must be consum'd; whose soule returnes
To endlesse paine in burning lakes.
You seeme by this, to wish me well,
To teach me tread the path to hell.

Gen. 38. 24. Whoremoungers burnt.

Call you this (Love) that bringeth sin,
And sowes the seedes of heavie cheere?
If this be love, I pray begin,
To hate the thing I love so deere;
I love no love of such a rate,
Nor fancie that, which God doth hate.

Prover. 5. 3.

But what saith he that long had tryde
Of harlots all the wanton flights;
Beware least that your hart be tyde,
To fond affects by wanton sights:
Their wandering eies, and wanton lookes,
Catch fooles as fish, with painted hookes.

Their lippes with oyle and honie flow,
Their tongs are fraught with flattering guile;
Amidst these joyes great sorrowes grow;
For pleasures flourish but a while,
Their feete to death, their steps to hell,
Do swiftly slide, that thus do mell.

Then flie this dead and dreadfull love,
This signe of Gods revenging ire;
Let love of God such lust remove,
And quench the flames of foule desire,
If you will count me for your frend,
You must both workes and words amend.

CANT. LIX

With this bitter reply of *Avisa*, H. W. being somewhat daunted, yet not altogether whithout hope, went home to his house, and there secretly in a melancolike passion wrote these verses following.

H. W. to AVISA my friendly foe

Sixain

The busie Gnat about the candle, hovering still doth flie,
The slimie Fish about the bayt, still wavering doth lie,
The fearefull Mouse about the trap doth often try his strength,
Untill both Gnat, and Fish and Mouse, be taken at the length,
Even so unhappie I, do like my greatest baine,
Unlesse you do with speede, release my mortall paine.

Quatraine.

The light foote hart desires the water brooke,
The dog most sicke the greenest grasse doth crave,
The wounded wight for surgeon still doth looke,
Untill both hart, and dogge, and wight their medicine have:
But I with griefe th'unhappiest of them all,
Do still delight to be my enemies thrall.

Deuxaine.

Mine enemie I say, though yet my sweetest frend,
If of my sorrowes I may see some speedie holsome end.

FINIS. Chi la dura, la Vince.

CANT. LX

AVISA, her reply to H. W.

The busie Gnat for want of wit,
Doth sindge his wings in burning flame,
The Fish with baite will headlong flit,
Till she be choked with the same;
So you with Gnat and Fish will play,
Till flame and foode worke your decay.

The heedlesse Mouse, that tries the trap,
In hast to reach her harts desire,
Doth quickly find such quainte mishap,
That barres her strength from free retire,
So you will never ceasse to crave,
Till you have lost that now you have.

The hart, the dogge, the wounded wight,
For water, grasse, and Surgeon call,
Their griefes and cures, are all but light,
But your conceite surpast them all;
Except you change your wanton mind,
You shall no ease, nor comfort find.

Always the same
AVISA.

CANT. LXI

H. W. prosecuteth his sute

Will not your laughty stomacke stoupe?
Will not this selfe conceite come downe?
As haggard loving mirthlesse coupe,
At frendly lure doth checke and frowne?
Blame not in this the Faulkners skill,
But blame the Hawkes unbridled will.

Your sharp replies, your frowning cheare,
To absent lines, and present vew,
Doth aie redouble trembling feare,
And griping griefes do still renew,
  Your face to me my sole reliefe,
  My sight to you your onely griefe.

O lucklesse wretch, what hap had I,
To plant my love in such a soile?
What furie makes me thus relie
On her that seekes my utter spoile?
  O Gods of love, what signe is this,
  That in the first, I first should mis?

And can you thus increase my woe,
And will you thus prolong my paine?
Canst kill the hart that loves thee so,
Canst quit my love with foule disdaine?
  And if thou canst, woe worth the place,
  Where first I saw that flattering face.

And shall my folly prove it trew,
That hastie pleasure doubleth paine,
Shall griefe rebound, where joye[s] grew?
Of faithfull hart is this the gaine?
  Me thinks for all your grave advise,
  (Forgive my thought) you are not wise.

Would God I could restraine my love,
Sith you to love me can not yeeld,
But I alas cannot remove
My fancie, though I die in feeld:
  My life doth on your love depend,
  My love and life at once must end.

CANT. LXII

Avisa

What witlesse errors do possesse
The wretched minds of loving fooles,
That breathlesse runne to such distresse,
That lively heate fond sorrowe cooles?
  They reke not where they stand or fall,
  Deny them love, take life and all.

It seemes a death to change their mind,
Or alter once their foolish will,
Such od conceites they seeke to find,
As may their childish fancies fill,
  It makes me smile thus, now and then,
  To see the guise of foolish men.

I can not stoupe to wandring lure;
My mind is one, and still the same;
While breath, while life, while daies indure,
I will not yeeld to worke my shame,
  Then if you strive and stirre in vaine,
  Blame but the fruites of idle braine.

If I do sometimes looke awrie,
As loth to see your blobered face,
And loth to heare a yong man crie,
Correct for shame this childish race,
  And though you weepe and waile to mee
  Yet let not all these follies see.

Good *Harry* leave these raging toyes,
That thus from restlesse fancie flow,
Unfit for men, not meete for boyes,
And let's a while talke wisely now;
  If that you love me as you say,
  Then cease such madnes to bewray.

If honest love could breed content,
And frame a liking to your will,
I would not sticke to give consent,
To like you so, and love you still,
  But while lust leades your love awrie,
  Assure your selfe, I will denie.

CANT. LXIII

H. W.

And is it lust that welds my love?
Or is it but your fond surmise?
Will you condemne, before you prove?
How can I thinke you to be wise?
  O faithfull hart, yet thrice accurst,
  That art misdeemd thus at the first.

If lust did rule my restlesse hart,
If onely lust did beare the sway,
I quickly could asswage my smart,
With choise, and change, for every day,
  You should not laugh to see me weepe,
  If lust were it that strake so deepe.

. . . . . .

And yet to prove my love more sure,
And since you will not false your faith,
This pining plight I will indure,
Till death do stop your husbands breath;
  To have me then if you will say,
  I will not marrie, till that day.

If you will give your full consent,
When God shall take your husbands life,
That then you will be well content,
To be my spouse and loving wife,
  I will be joyfull as before,
  And till that time will crave no more.

CANT. LXIV

AVISA

No more; no more, too much of this,
And is mine ynch become an ell?
If thus you writh my words amis,
I must of force, bid you farwell,
  You shew in this your loving bent,
  To catch at that I never ment.

I thought at first, (but this my thought
I must correct;) that simple love,
In guilles hart these fits had wrought.
But I; too simple I, now prove,
  That under shew of great good will,
  My harts delight you seeke to spill.

He loves me well, that tils a trap,
Of deepe deceite, and deadly baine,
In dreadful daungers thus to wrap
His friend by baites of flering traine:
  Though flattering tongues can paint it brave
  Your words do shew, what love you have.

I must consent, and you will stay
My husbands death. Obtaining this,
You thinke I could not say you Nay:
Nor of your other purpose mis,
  You are deceiv'd, and you shall trie,
  That I such faith, and friends defie.

Such fained, former, faithlesse plot
I most detest, and tell you plaine,
If now I were to cast my lot,
With free consent to chuse againe,
  Of all the men I ever knew,
  I would not make my choice of you.

Let this suffice, and do not stay
On hope of that which will not be,
Then cease your sute, go where you may,
Vaine is your trust to hope on me,
  My choice is past, my hart is bent,
  While that remaines, to be content.

Now having tract the winding trace,
Of false resemblance, give me leave,
From this to shew a stranger grace,
Then heretofore, you did perceave,
  Gainst friendlesse love if I repyne,
  The fault is yours, & none of myne.

CANT. LXV

H. W.

I will not wish, I cannot vow,
Thy hurt, thy griefe, though thou disdaine,
Though thou refuse, I know not how,
To quite my love with love againe:
  Since I have swore to be thy frend,
  As I began, so will I end.

Sweare thou my death, worke thou my woe,
Conspire with greefe to stop my breath,
Yet still thy frend, & not thy foe
I will remayne untill my death:
  Choose whome thou wilt, I will resigne,
  If love, or faith, be like to mine.

But while I wretch too long have lent
My wandring eyes to gase on thee.
I have both tyme, & travell spent
In vaine, in vaine: and now I see,
They do but frutelesse paine procure,
To haggard kytes that cast the lure.

When I am dead, yet thou mayst boast,
Thou hadst a frend, a faithfull frend,
That living liv'd to love thee most,
And lov'd thee still unto his end;
Though thou unworthy, with disdaine
Did'st force him live and dye in paine.

Now may I sing, now sigh, and say,
Farewell my lyfe, farewell my joy,
Now mourne by night, now weepe by day,
Love, too much love breedes myne annoy:
What can I wish, what should I crave,
Sith that is gon, that I should have.

Though hope be turned to dispaire,
Yet give my tongue leave to lament,
Beleeve me now, my hart doth sweare,
My lucklesse love was truly ment:
Thou art too proud, I say no more,
Too stout, and wo is me therefore.

FELICE CHI PUO.

CANT. LXVI

Avisa having heard this patheticall fancy of H. W. and seeing the teares trill downe his cheekes, as halfe angry to see such passionate follie, in a man that should have goverment, with a frowning countenance turned from him, without farder answere, making silence her best reply, and following the counsell of the wise, not to answere a foole in his folly lest he grow too foolish, returted quite from him, and left him alone. But he departing home, and not able by reason to rule the raginge fume of this phantasticall fury, cast himselfe uppon his bed, & refusing both foode and comfort for many daies together, fell at length into such extremity of passionate affections, that as many as saw him, had great doubt of his health, but more of his wittes, yet, after a longe space absence, having procured some respite from his sorrowes, he takes his pen and wrate, as followeth.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

H. W.

Lyke wounded Deare whose tender sydes are bath'ed in blood,
From deadly wound, by fatall hand & forked shaft:
So bleedes my pearced hart, for so you thinke it good,
With cruelty to kill, that which you got by craft:
You still did loth my lyfe, my death shall be your gaine,
To dye to do you good, I shall not thinke it paine.

My person could not please, my talke was out of frame,
Though hart and eye could never brooke my loathed sight,
Yet love doth make me say, to keepe you out of blame,
The fault was only mine, and that you did but right,
When I am gon, I hope my ghost shall shew you plaine,
That I did truly love, and that I did not faine.

Now must I fynd the way to waile while lyfe doth last,
Yet hope I soone to see, the end of dolefull dayes;
When floudes of flowing feares, and creeping cares are past,
Then shall I leave to sing, and write these pleasant layes:
For now I loth the foode, and bloud that lends me breath,
I count all pleasures paine that keepe me from my death.

To darke and heavy shades, I now will take my flight,
Where nether tongue nor eye shall tell or see my fall,
That there I may disject these dregges of thy dispight,
And purge the clotted blood, that now my hart doth gall:
In secret silence so, Perforce shall be my song,
Till truth make you confesse that you have done me wrong.
Gia speme spenta.
H. W.

Avisa refusing both to come or send him any aunswere, after a long & melancholike deliberation, he wrate againe so as followeth-

CANT. LXVII

H. W.

Though you refuse to come or send,
Yet this I send, though I do stay,
Unto these lynes some credit lend,
And marke it well what they shall say,
They cannot hurt, then reade them all,
They do but shew their maisters fall.

Though you disdaine to shew remorce,
You were the first and onely wight,
Whose fawning features did inforce
My will to runne beyond my might:
In femall face such force we see,
To captive them, that erst were free.

Your onely word was then a law
Unto my mynd, if I did sinne,
Forgive this sinne, but then I saw
My bane or blisse did first beginne,
See what my fancy coulde have donne,
Your love at first, if I had wonne.

All fortune flat I had defyde,
To choice and change defyance sent,
No frowning fates could have denyde,
My loves persute, & willing bent,
This was my mynd, if I had found
Your love as myne, but half so sound.

Then had I bad the hellish rout,
To frounce aloft their wrinckled front,
And cursed haggs that are so stout,
I boldly would have bid avaunt,
Let earth and ayre have fround their fill
So I had wrought my wished will.

No raging storme, nor whirling blast,
My setled heart could have annoyd,
No sky with thundering cloudes orecast
Had hurt, if you I had enjoyed,
Now hope is past, loe you may see,
How every toy tormenteth mee.

Chi circa trova.

CANT. LXVIII

H. W.

With oken planckes to plane the waves,
What Neptunes rage could I have fear'd
To quell the gulfe that rudely raves,
What perill could have once appear'd?
But now that I am left alone;
Bare thoughts enforce my hart to grone.

With thee to passe the chamfered groundes,
What force or feare could me restraine?
With thee or chase the Scillan houndes,
Me thinkes it were a pleasant paine,
  This was my thought, this is my love,
  Which none but death, can yet remove.

It then behoves my fainting sprite,
To lofty skyes returne againe,
Sith onely death bringes me delite,
Which loving live in curelesse paine,
  What hap to strangers is assind,
  If knowne frendes doo such favour find.

How often have my frendly mates
My loving errours laught to scorne,
How oft for thee found I debates,
Which now I wish had beene forborne:
  But this & more would I have donne,
  If I thy favour could have wonne.

I saw your gardens passing fyne,
With pleasant flowers lately dect,
With Couslops and with Eglentine,
When wofull Woodbyne lyes reject:
  Yet these in weedes and briars meet,
  Although they seeme to smell so sweet.

The dainty Daysy bravely springes,
And cheefest honour seemes to get,
I envy not such frendly thinges,
But blesse the hand that these have set:
  Yet let the Hysope have his place,
  That doth deserve a speciall grace.

VIVI, CHI VINCE.

CANT. LXIX

H. W.

But now farewell, your selfe shall see,
An odd exchange of frends in tyme.
You may perhappes then wish for mee,
And waile too late this cruell cryme:
  Yea wish your selfe perhaps beshrewd,
  That you to me such rigor shewd.

I cannot force you for to like,
Where cruell fancy doth rebell,
I must some other fortune seeke,
But where or how I cannot tell:
And yet I doubt where you shall find
In all your life so sure a friend.

Of pleasant dayes the date is donne,
My carcase pyneth in conceat,
The lyne of lyfe his race hath runne,
Expecting sound of deathes retreat:
Yet would I live to love thee still,
And do thee good against thy will.

How can I love, how can I live,
Whil'st that my hart hath lost his hope,
Dispaire abandons sweet reliefe,
My love, and life have lost their scope:
Yet would I live thy feature to behold,
Yet would I love, if I might be so bold.

These verses exceed measure, to shew that his affections keepe no compasse, and his exceeding love.

My griefe is greene, and ever springes,
My sorrowe full of deadly sap,
Sweet death remove these bitter thinges,
Give end to hard and cruell hap:
Yet would I live if I might see,
My life, or limmes might pleasure thee.

Farewell that sweet and pleasant walke,
The witnesse of my faith and wo,
That oft hath heard our frendly talke,
And giv'n me leave my griefe to show,
O pleasant path, where I could see
No crosse at all but onely shee.

IL FINE, FA IL TUTTO.

CANT. LXX

H. W.

Like silly Bat, that loves the darke,
And seldome brookes the wished light,
Obscurely so I seeke the marke,
That aye doth vanish from my sight,
Yet shall she say, I died her frend,
Though by disdaine she sought mine end.

Faine would I cease, and hold my tong,
But love and sorrow set me on,
Needes must I plaine of spitefull wrong,
Sith hope and health will both be gon,
When branch from inward rind is fled,
The barke doth wish the body dead.

If ever man were borne to woe,
I am the man, you know it well,
My chiefest friend, my greatest foe,
And heaven become my heavie hell,
This do I feele, this do I find:
But who can loose, that God will bind?

For since the day, O dismall day
I first beheld that smiling face,
My fancie made her choice straightway,
And bad all other loves give place,
Yea, since I saw thy lovely sight,
I frize and frie, twixt joye and spight.

Where fond suspect doth keepe the gate
There trust is chased from the dore,
Then faith and truth will come too late,
Where falshod will admit no more;
Then naked faith and love must yeeld,
For lacke offence, and flie the field.

Then easier were it for to chuse,
To crale against the craggie hill,
Then sutes, then sighs, then words to use,
To change a froward womans will,
Then othes and vowes are all in vaine,
And truth a toye, where fancies raigne.

AMA, CHI TI AMA.

CANT. LXXI

H. W.

My tongue, my hand, my ready hart,
That spake, that felt, that freely thought,
My love, my limbes, my inward smart,
Have all performed what they ought,
These all do love you yet, and shall,
And when I change, let vengeance fall.

Shall I repent, I ever saw
That face, that so can frowne on mee?
How can I wish, when fancies draw
Mine eies to wish, and looke for thee?
Then though you do denie my right,
Yet bar me not from wished sight.

And yet I crave, I know not what,
Perchance my presence breeds your paine,
And if I were perswaded that,
I would in absence still remaine,
You shall not feele the smallest griefe
Although it were to save my life.

Ah woe is me, the case so stands,
That sencelesse papers plead my wo,
They can not weepe, nor wring their hands,
But say perhaps, that I did so,
And though these lines for mercie crave,
Who can on papers pittie have?

O that my griefes, my sighs, my teares,
Might plainely muster in your vew,
Then paine, not pen, then faith, not feares,
Should vouch my vowes, and writings trew,
This wishing shewes a wofull want,
Of that which you by right should grant.

Now fare thou well, whose wel-fare brings
Such lothsome feare, and ill to me,
Yet heere thy friend this farwell sings,
Though heavie word a farwell be.
Against all hope, if I hope still,
Blame but abundance of good will.

GRAND AMORE, GRAND DOLORE,
INOPEM ME COPIA FECIT.
H. W.

CANT. LXXII

AVISA, her last reply

Your long Epistle I have read,
Great store of words, and little wit,
(For want of wit, these fancies bred)
To aunswere all I thinke not fit,
But in a word, you shall perceave,
How kindly I will take my leave.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

When you shall see sweete Lillies grow,
And flourish in the frozen yse,
When ebbing tides shall leave to flow,
And mountaines to the skies shall ryse,
  When roring Seas do cease to rave,
  Then shall you gaine the thing you crave.

When Fish as haggard Hawkes shall flie,
When Seas shall flame, and Sunne shall freese.
When mortall men shall never die,
And earth shall yeeld, nor herbe nor trees,
  Then shall your words my mind remove,
  And I accept your proffered love.

When Thames shall leave his channell drie,
When Sheepe shall feede amidst the Sea.
When stones aloft, as Birds shall flie,
And night be changed into day,
  Then shall you see that I will yeeld,
  And to your force resigne the feeld.

Till all these things doe come to passe,
Assure your selfe, you know my mind,
My hart is now, as first it was,
I came not of dame Chrysiedes kind,
  Then leave to hope, learne to refraine,
  Your mind from that, you seeke in vaine.

I wish you well, and well to fare,
And there with all a godly mind,
Devoid of lust, and foolish care,
This if you seeke, this shall you find.
  But I must say, as erst before,
  Then cease to waile, and write no more.
Always the same
AVISA.

H. W. Was now againe striken so dead, that hee hath not yet any farder assaid, nor I thinke ever will, and where he be alive or dead I know not, and therfore I leave him.

THE AUTHORS CONCLUSION

So thus she stands unconquered yet,
As Lambe amidst the Lions pawes,
Whom gifts, nor wils, nor force of wit,
Could vanquish once with all their shewes,
To speake the truth, and say no more,
I never knew her like before.

Then blame me not, if I protest,
My sillie Muse shall still commend
This constant A. above the rest,
While others learne their life to mend;
My tongue on high and high shall raise,
And alway sing her worthie praise.

While hand can write, while wit devise,
While tongue is free to make report,
Her vertue shall be had in prise
Among the best and honest sort,
And they that wil mislike of this,
I shall suspect, they strike amis.

Eternall then let be the fame
Of such as hold a constant mind,
Eternall be the lasting shame
Of such as wave with every wind:
Though some there be that will repine;
Yet some will praise this wish of mine.

But here I cease for feare of blame
Although there be a great deale more,
That might be spoken of this dame,
That yet lies hid in secret store,
If this be lik't, then can I say
Ye may see more another day.

AGITANTE CALESCIMUS ILLO
Farewell.

FINIS

THE RESOLUTION OF A CHAST AND A CONSTANT WIFE,

that minds to continue faithfull unto her husband.
To the tune of Fortune.

Though winged Birds, do often skorne the lure,
And flying farre, do thinke themselves most sure,
Yet fancie so, his luring ingines frame,
That wildest harts, in time become most tame.

Where secret nature, frames a sweete consent,
Where privie fates their hidden force have bent,
To joyne in hart, the bodies that are twaine,
Flie where you list, you shall returne againe.

From fancies lure, I strived still to flie,
Long time I did my fortune flat denie,
Till at the length, my wrastling bred my woe,
Knowing that none, their fortune can forgoe.

For while I liv'd, in prime of vernant youth,
Falshod that shew'd, the face of fained truth,
Falsly gan weave a web of wylie kind;
So to intrap my plaine and simple mind.

Great were the sutes, great were the frendly signes,
Sweete were the words, to poyson tender minds,
Large were the gifts, great were the proffers made,
To force my mind, to trie a trustlesse trade.

Great were the wights, that dayly did conspire,
To pluck the rose, their fancies did desire,
Traile did the teares, in hope to purchase trust,
Yet this was all, no love, but luring lust.

No fancie could then force me to replie,
Nor move my mind such doubtfull deeds to trie:
For well I knew, although I knew not all,
Such tickle trades procure a suddaine fall.

Thus did I mount, thus did I flie at will,
Thus did I scape the foulers painted skill,
Thus did I save my feathers from their lime,
Thus did I live a long and happie time.

Cupid that great, and mightie kings could move,
Could never frame, my hart to like of love,
His limber shafts, and eke his golden dart,
Were still too blunt, to pearce my steelie hart.

Till at the length, as nature had assind,
Unto the earth, I bent a willing mind:
He was the first, to whom I gave my hand,
With free consent, to live in holy band.

Eva that gave her faithfull promise so,
With Adam to live in wealth and in wo,
Of faithfull hart, could never have more store,
Then I have felt, thrice three yeares space & more.

When I had giev'n my hart and free consent,
No earthly thing could make me once repent,
No Seas of griefe, ne cares that I could find,
Could so prevaile, to make me change my mind.

Did fortune fawne, or did our fortune frowne,
Did he exalt, or did he cast me downe,
My faithfull hart did ever make me sing,
Welcome to me, what ever fortune bring,

Now when I thought, all dangers had bene past
Of lawlesse sutes, and sutors at the last,
The trade, the time, the place wherein I live,
Unto this Lampe, new oyle doe dayly give.

But like of this all you that love to range,
My fixed hart likes not the skittish change,
Now have I made the choice that shall remaine,
Vengeance befall, when I do change againe.

Now have I found a friend of high desart,
I have his love, and he has stoole my hart,
Now fortune packe, with all thy pelting store,
This is my choice, I like to chuse no more.

Cease then your sutes, yee lustie gallants all,
Thinke not I stoupe at every Faulkners call,
Trusse up your lures, your luring is in vaine,
Chosen is the Pearch, whereon I will remaine.

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

Spend not your breath in needlesse fained talkes,
Seeke other mates, that love such roving walkes,
None shall ever vaunt, that they have my consent,
Then let me rest, for now I am content.

Great be your birth, and greater be your wealth,
I recken more my credit and my health,
Though I be weake, my power very scant,
God so provides that I shall never want.

Be mine owne at home, or be he absent long,
Absent or present, this still shall be my song,
Fortune my friend, A friend to me hath lent,
This is my choise, and therewith am content.

Range they that list, and change who ever will,
One hath mine oth, and his I will be still,
Now let us fall, or let us rise on hie,
Still will I sing, now well content am I.

THE PRAISE OF A CONTENTED MIND

The God that framde the fixed pole, and Lamps of gleaming light,
The azure skies, and twinkling Starres, to yeeld this pleasant sight,
In wisdome pight this perelesse plot, a rare surpassing frame,
And so with brave and sweete delights, have fraught and dect the same,
That every creature keepes his course, his compasse and his place,
And with delightfull joye runnes, his pointed time and race,
In one consent they friendly joyne, from which they can not fall,
As if the Lord had first ordainde, one soule to guide them all,
In every part there doth remaine, such love and free consent,
That every frame doth kisse his lot, and cries I am content.
The Articke pole that never moves, by which the shipmen saile,
Craves not to change his frizen Axe, nor from his place to steale,
The fixed Starres, that sildome range, delight their circles so,
That from their choise by wanton change, they never yeeld to go.
The Sunne and Moone that never hide, their brave resplendent raies,
Did never wish in wavering will, to change their wonted waies.
The roaring Sea, with ebbs and tides, that leapes against the land,
Is yet content for all his rage, to stay within his band.
The flooting Fish, the singing Bird, all beasts with one consent,
To live according to their kind, do shew them selves content.
So that by practise and by proofe, this sentence true I find,
That nothing in this earth is like, a sweete contented mind.
The beasts, the Birds, and ayrie powers, do keepe their compasse well,
And onely man above the rest, doth love for to rebell.
This onely man, the Lord above, with reason did indue
Yet onely man, ungratefull man, doth shew himselfe untrue.
No sooner was brave Adam made, but Sathan wrought his thrall,
For not content, aspiring pride, procurde his suddaine fall.
The princely Primerose of the East, proud Eva gave consent,
To change her blisse to bale, for that, her mind was not content.
Thus may the darkest eie perceive, how follie strikes us blind,
Thus may we see the often change, of mans unconstant mind,
The Moone, the Sea, by natures course, do not so often change,
As do the wits and wanton wils, of such as love to range.
The rangling range that held from home Ulisses all too long,
Made chast Penelope complaine of him that did her wrong.
The lothsome daies, and lingering nights, her time in spinning spent:
She would not yeeld to change her choice, because she was content.
Such calme content doth plainely shew, that love did much abound,
Where free consent breeds not content, such faith is seldome found.
For carelesse Crysed that had gin, her hand, her faith and hart,
To Troilus her trustie friend, yet falsely did depart:
And giglotlike from Troye towne, to Grecians campe would goe,
To Diomede, whom in the end, she found a faithless foe,

For having sliu'd the gentle slip, his love was turnd to hate.
And she a leaper did lament, but then it was too late.
Now foolish fancie was the cause, this Crysed did lament,
For when she had a faithfull friend, she could not be content.
Ten thousand fell at Troyes siege, whose bloud had not been spent,
If fickle headded Hellen could, at first have bene content.
You can not in the Serpents head, such deadly poyson find,
As is the fained love that lives, with discontented mind.
Of all the wisdome of the wise, that I could ever tell,
This wisdome beares the chiefest sway, to stay when we be well,
As sweetest Musicke rudely jarres, except there be consent:
So hottest love doth quickly coole, except it be content.
Of all the brave resounding words, which God to man hath lent,
This soundeth sweetest in mine eare, to say. *I am content.*

Ever or Never.

THE APOLOGIE,

shewing the true meaning of Willobie his Avisa[1]

To a new Edition give me leave to adde a new Instruction, for such as I understand, have made of the other, a false and captious construction. If *Sapiens* come *à Sapore* (as some will have it, and that as the Taste judgeth of meates, so wise men judge of natures and intents) I marvaile that some men so greatly affecting the name of wisedome, have by rash judgement, (the badge of folly) shewed themselves so much unwise, and without sap. But I see that as it happeneth in the distemperature of the body, so it often fareth in the disorders of the minde: for the body being oppressed with the venemous malice of some predominate humor, the seate of judgment which is the taste, is corrupted: and meates, which of their owne nature are wholesome and sweete, seeme unto the mouth (ill affected) both bitter, unsavorie, and unwholesome: So the heart being possessed with a veine of vanitie, or a spirit of prejudicate opinion, directeth judgement by the line of fancie, not of reason: and the bitternesse of his owne infected folly, marres the sweete taste of other mens simple and honest meaning. Therefore because some have applyed this Poeme, as they ought not; I am inforced to speake that which I thought not.

Many branches of errors, have sprouted forth from the roote of one fond and misconstrued conceite. The growing of such grafts, I hoped that I had sufficiently prevented in the Preface first printed with this booke. But this is the generall fault of all rash Readers, when they see a booke, they turne either to the middest, or the latter end or at all adventures reading that which at first opening they happen on: if that presently doe not fit their fancie, they will sodainly pronounce a definitive sentence of condemnation, both against the matter and the maker; as if by the inspiration of some Pythian Oracle, they were presently brought in possession of the whole sence, meaning and intent of the Author, having reade neither the preface, nor perchance six lines of the whole booke.

But most I marvaile that one P. C. (who seemeth to bee a Scholler) hath beene carried away with this streame of misconceived folly: For I dare pawne my life, that there is no particular woman in the world, that was either partie or privie to any

[1] From the edition of 1596 of *Willobie his Avisa*, as reprinted in the edition of 1635.

one sentence or word in that booke. This poeticall fiction was penned by the Author at least for thirtie and five yeeres since, (as it will be proved) and lay in wast papers in his study, as many other prettie things did, of his devising; and so might have continued still (as his *Susanna* yet doth) had not I, contrarie to his knowledge, with paine collected it; and (in consideration of the good end, to which it was directed) published it. Seeing therefore that I gave the offence, I must satisfie for it, in defending innocents from slanderous tongues. This plaine Morall device was plotted only for the repression and opening of *Vice;* and to the exaltation and triumph of *Vertue*, as hee himselfe saith.

My sleepy Muse that wakes but now,
To vertues prayse hath past her vow.

Vertue therefore being *Genus*, and Chastitie *Species*, if hee should have described it, either in *Genere* or *Specie*, as some have done, he might have beene as obscure as some others have beene. Hee fained therefore an *Individuum*, as it were a particular of this speciall, the more familiarly to expresse it, as it were in common talke, as if one did answere another, to delight the reader the more, with variety of folly quenched presently, with the like varietie of Vertue. To this fained *Individuum*, he gave this fained name *Avisa*. Which poeticall fiction P. C. calleth a pamphlet. It is folly for a man to despise that which he cannot mend. The Author was unknowne, not because hee could not; but because hee would not know him: his true name being open in every Page. He saith: the Author hath registred the meanest. I thought that Chastitie had not beene the meanest, but rather one of the greatest gifts, that God giveth to men or women. If by the meanest, he meane any other object or subject of *Willobie* his Muse, then Chastity itselfe (under the fained name of *Avisa*) it is a meaning of his owne making; and a subject of his owne suggestion, far from the mind of the first maker. None can eternize their folly in things which they never thought of: but I pray God some other have not eternized their follies, more wayes then one. If this fained name of *Avisa* mislike any man, for any hidden or private cause to the Author or me unknowne, let him call it what he will: So that he understand that it is Chastity it selfe, not any woman in the world, that is fained to give these foyles to this foule vice.

Therefore, whereas some in their gravity despise it for the lightnesse, and thinke it but a fantasticall toy, without any reach

or secret sence, I will not strive to turne the course of that streame. Yet if my fancie might be admitted a judge in this matter, it would produce a sentence of a farre contrary nature. For it seemeth rather to me that the Author intending some rare exploit, endevoured to describe the doubtful combat, that is daily fought betweene Vice and Vertue, two princes of great power. And to that end he chose out two of the most approved Captaines of both the Campes to trie the quarrell. Out of the one hee tooke *Luxuriam*, Lecherie, which as we see, swayeth the minds of the greatest men, and commandeth largely. Out of the other, he opposeth *Castitatem*, Chastitie, a souldier rarely seene (in these dayes) to resist the enemies Push, and therefore in one of his verses, is called A Phœnix, or rare-seene bird.

The souldiers which hee drawes forth to fight under the banner of this Captaine Lecherie, are all estates and degrees, and all Countries and Commonwealthes: meaning, that no men, from the highest estate to the lowest; no Countries, from the most civill to the most barbarous, are free from the servile subjection of this raging principality: So that in this part, hee describeth the combats, the assaults, the intisements, and allurements, which Noblemen, Gentlemen, and all other loose and unbridled mindes, can by money, wealth, pleasure, force, fancy, or any other patheticall passion, procure, or devise, to raze the walls of besieged Chastity. Under whose banner he sendeth forth onely one poore woman, of a fayned name (minding to shew what the propertie of good women should bee) to resist so many, so mighty, so strong, and subtill enemies, fighting with such forcible weapons of honour, authority, glorie, ease and pleasure. Surely, he imagined, that in some women there was yet left so much Chastitie, as was able to resist the lewd and divelish temptations of all men whatsoever. And therefore, through the whole booke, he attributeth the victory to vertue, and the foyle to folly.

And farther, where as in other bookes, there is found a bare description onely, or naming of Vice or vertue, me thinkes in reading of this, my conceite tels mee that in the person of this woman all the mortall vertues, with one voyce are heard pleading, and discoursing at large against vice, in a lively action: In whose words, (if they bee considered from the beginning to the end) we may see, how the spirit of God striveth against the Spirit of Sathan, by reasons, by Scriptures, and by prophane Histories, to lay open the greatnesse, the foulenesse, the danger,

and deceit of this deadly sin, that rageth so hotly, in the unmortified members of mortall men.

On the other side me thinks I see how the Devill calling together all his companie, in hope of a conquest tries all wayes and assayes all meanes to effect his desire. But his labor is imagined heere to be lost, and that there is some modesty, wisedome, honestie and feare of God remaining yet in some women, sufficient at all times to overcome him. Therfore whosoever accounteth this Poeme, but a vaine fiction, cutteth the throate of all feminine faith, and robbeth all chast Ladies of their chiefest honour.

Some others, being much addicted to that sweete bitter sinne of Leacherie, thinke their secret practices of bauderie, to be too plainely described, and therefore labour to have it registred for a meere toy. I will not, as a Physition assay with *Helleborus*, to purge their heads of those humors, least perhaps they bee of the men of *Abydus*, who (as *Aristotle* reporteth) being mad, tooke such delight in their madnesse that they were angry with them that brought them to their wits.

Some others there be, who when they have read this booke, have blushed to themselves, finding, as they thought, their very words and writings which they had used in the like attempts. In which is to be noted, the force of a guilty conscience, which feares where no feare is, and flyeth when no man followeth. These fancies (forsooth) have framed names to letters, of their owne devices; and they have imagined places of their owne placing, so fitly for everie description, that they will needs inforce the Author to speake of them, whom he never knew; to ayme at their fancies, whose faces he never saw; and to Cypher their names, whose natures to him were ignorant and strange.

Lastly; concerning the fained name of AVISA I have shewed the Authors device, and his reason for the fiction, in the first preface, which I thought would have quailed all other fictions whatsoever.

But yet if farder yee will have my conceit, the order, words, and frame of the whole discourse, force me to think that which I am unwilling to say. That this name insinuateth, that there was never such a woman seene, as heere is described. For the word A'VISA is compounded, (after the Greeke manner) of the privative particle A, which signifieth *Non:* and of the participle *Visus, Visa, Visum*, which signifieth, Seene: So that *A'visa*

should signifie (by this) as much as *Non visa*, that is: Such a woman as was never seene. Which if it bee true, then *Avisa* is yet unborne, that must rejoyce in this prayse. The Author in this booke compareth this vertue of Chastity unto a Bird, as is seene in his introduction, saying: *Of Vertues Bird*, my muse must sing.

For as the Birde by his wings mounteth in the aire upwards to heaven: So Chastitie, where ever it is, makes the minde to mount from the base and filthy society of earthly conceits, and fits it to flie up to God, in heavenly meditations; whereas lust and wicked pleasures, chaine the minde in thraldome of fleshly concupiscence (as *Prometheus* was tyed to the hill *Caucasus*) which will not suffer the thoughts to ascend by any meanes. The same Hieroglyphicall allusion they meant, that pictured *S. John* with a Birde sitting by him, to signifie, that of all the foure Evangelistes, hee in his Gospell flew highest, and spake most of the Dietie of Christ. Now therefore the latine word of a Birde being *Avis*, and the Author (perchance) alluding unto that, did the rather call his victorious mounting victory of Vertue, by the name of *Avisa*, as alluding to his owne allusion. If any man therefore by this, should take occasion to surmise, that the Author meant to note any woman, whose name sounds something like that name, it is too childish and too absurd, and not beseeming any deepe judgement, considering there are many things, which cannot be applyed to any woman.

But to conclude, thus much, I dare precisely avouch, that the Author intended in this discourse, neither the description or prayse of any particular woman; nor the naming or cyphering of any particular man. But in generall under a fained name insinuateth what godly and constant women should doe, and say in such lewde temptations. And also, under fained letters, generally expresseth, what course most of these lawlesse sutors take, in pursuit of their fancied fooleries, and therefore this P. C. hath offred manifest injurie to some, what ever they bee, whom his private fancie hath secretly framed in conceit.

This is the least that I could say, and the last that ever I wil say touching this matter in defence of my friend. If any notwithstanding will continue the errour of their unsatisfied minds they must for ever rest in the rightlesse erring, till the Authour (now of late gone to God) returne from Heaven to satisfie them farder touching his meaning. And so farwel. Oxford this 30. of *June*. 1596.

Thine to use,
HADRIAN DORRELL.

THE VICTORIE OF ENGLISH CHASTITIE,

Under the fained name of Avisa[1]

For beauties Ball, in *Ida*-Vale,
Three Nimphes at once, did once contend,
The Princely *Shepheard* of the *Dale*,
By judgement did the quarrell end:
That *Paris* might faire *Hellen* have,
The *Golden Price* to *Venus* gave.

In *Sea-bred* soyle, on *Tempe* downes,
Whose silver spring, from *Neptunes* Well,
With mirth salutes the neighbour townes,
A hot *Contention* lately fell:
Twice two sweet *Graces*, urge the strife,
Of two which was the *Constant'st* wife.

Faire *Venus* vaunts *Penelops* fame
From *Greece*, from listes of *Lavin Land*
Proud *Juno* stoutly doth the same,
Whose prayse in princely wealth doth stand:
They both condemne *Diana's* choyce,
That to *Avisa* gave her voyce.

Then came the pale *Athenian Muse*,
Whose learned wisdome past them all,
She with *Diana* did refuse
The *Grecians* prayse: though *Juno* call,
Chaste *Wit* to *Wealth* here will not yeeld:
Nor yet to strangers leave the field;

Whil'st *Eris* flasht these fretting flames,
A Noble prince in *Rosie* borne,
Rogero hight, to *Angry* dames,
His flying steed, and pace did turne,
Which done they all did straight agree,
That this *Rogero*, Judge should be.

Contention

A noble man of Greece, not farre from Helicon.

On flowrie bancks, this Councell pla'st,
From jealous *Juno's* envious eyes,
Long smothered hate flames forth at last,
In furious smoakes of angry cries:
As though she had the Garland wan,
With scoffing termes, she thus began.

[1] Reprinted from the edition of 1596 in the edition of 1635.

the Oration of *Juno* against English Chastity under the name, of *Avisa*.

"Stoop *Grecian* trumpes, cease *Romans* prayse,
Shut up with shame, your famous dames;
Sith we our selves *Base Britans* rayse
To over-Top their chiefest fames:
With *Noble* faith what madnesse dare.
Such *Novell* guestes and faith compare?

"*Penelope* must now contend
For chaste renowne: whose constant heart,
Both Greeks and Latines all commend,
With poore *Avisa* new upstart;
I scorne to speake much in this case,
Her prayses *Rivall* is so base.

"*Penelope* sprang from Noble house,
By Noble match, twice Noble made;
Avisa, both by Syre and spouse,
Was linckt to men of meanest trade:
What furie forc't *Diana's* wit,
To match these two so farre unfit?

"The *Grecian* dame of princely peeres
Twice fifty flatly did denie;
Twice ten yeeres long in doubtfull feares,
Could new *Avisa* so reply?
And she that is so stout and strong,
Could she have staid but halfe so long?

"Fie, leave for shame, thus to commend,
So base a *Britaine*, shall I speake?
I think these Muses did intend,
To blow a glasse that should not breake:
Here *Venus* smilde, and *Juno* staid,
Judge now (quoth she) for I have said."

The reply of *Pallas* against *Juno* in defence of *Avisa*.

When *Pallas* heard this rufling rage,
These toying jestes, this false surmise:
Shee paws'd which way she might asswage,
The flame that thus began to rise;
With setled grace and modest eye,
Thus did shee frame her milde reply.

"Thou princely *Judge* here maist thou see,
What force in *Error* doth remaine,
In envious Pride what fruites there be,
To writhe the paths, that lie so plaine:
A double darknes drownes the mind,
Whom selfe will make so wilfull blind,

WILLOBIE HIS AVISA

"Can *Britaine* breede no *Phœnix* bird,
No constant feme in English field?
To Greece to Rome, is there no third,
Hath *Albion* none that will not yeeld?
If this affirme you will not dare,
Then let me *Faith* with *Faith* compare.

"Let choyce respect of *Persons* slide,
Let *Faith and Faith* a while contend,
Urge not the *Names* till cause be tride,
'Tis onely *Faith*, that we commend,
We strive not for *Avisa's* fame,
We recke not of *Avisa's* name.

Willoby described no particular woman, but only Chastity and faith her selfe under the name of *Avisa*.

"To prove him vaine, that vainely strives,
That Chastity is no where found,
In English earth, in British wives,
That all are fickle, all unsound,
We framde a wench, we fain'd a name,
That should confound them all with shame.

"To this at first you did consent,
And lent with joy a helping hand,
You both at first were well content,
This fained frame should firmely stand,
We to *Diana* gave the maide,
That she might no way be betraied.

Chastity is named Avisa. Quasi non visa, aut ab Ave Altivolanto.

"The mounting *Phœnix, chast desire*
This *Vertue* fram'd, to conquer *Vice*,
This *Not-seene Nimph*, this heatlesse fire,
This *Chast-found Bird* of noble price,
Was nam'de *Avisa* by decree,
That *Name and nature* might agree.

"If this *Avisa* represent,
Chast Vertue in a fained *name*,
If *Chastity* it selfe be ment,
To be extold with lasting fame:
Her Greekish gemme can *Juno* dare,
With this *Avisa* to compare?

"Let wise *Ulysses* constant mate,
Vaunt noble birth her richest boast,
Yet will her challenge come too late,
When *Pride and wealth* have done their most
For this *Avisa* from above
Came downe, whose Syre, is mighty *Jove*

Chastity is the gift of God.

"How can you terme her then *Obscure*,
That shines so bright in every eye?
How is she base that can endure,
So long, so much, and mounts so hie?
If she you meane, have no such power,
Tis your *Avisa*, none of our.

True Chastity is soone and oftener found in the poorest then in the richest.

"This not seene bird, though rarely found
In proud attire, in gorgeous gownes,
Though she love most the countrie ground,
And shunnes the great and wealthy townes;
Yet if you know a bird so base,
In this *Device* she hath no place.

Chastity daily assaulted a thousand wayes yet it still getteth the victorie.

"Was Greekish dame twice ten yeares chast,
Did she twice fiftie flat deny?
Avisa hath *Ten Thousand* past,
To thousands daily doth reply,
If your *Avisa* have a blot
Your owne it is, we know her not.

"Some greatly doubt your *Grecian* dame
Where all be true that Poets faine:
But *Chastity* who can for shame,
Denie she hath, and will remaine,
Though women daily doe relent,
Yet this *Avisa* cannot faint.

The effects of true Chastitie.

"She quels by *Reason* filthy *lust*,
Shee chokes by *Wisdome* leude Desires,
Shee shunnes the baite that Fondlings trust,
From Satan's sleights she quite retires;
Then let *Avisa's* prayse bee spread,
When rich and poore, when all are dead.

"Let idle, vaine, and *Flewent Rigges*,
Be *Canton'de* with eternal shame,
Let blowing buddes of blessed twigges,
Let *Chaste-Avisa* live with fame:
This said, *Sweet Pallas* takes her rest,
Judge *Prince* (quoth she) what you thinke best.

The sentence of *Rogero* against *Juno*.

But wise *Rogero* pawsing staid,
Whose silence seem'd to shew some doubt,
Yet this at last he gravely said:
Ye *Nimphes* that are so faire, so stout,
Sith I your *Judge* to Judge must be,
Accept in worth, this short decree.

"The question is, where *Grecian Ghost*,
Can staine the stemme of *Troyan* rase:
Where *Ithac Nimphes* may onely boast,
And *Brittish Faith* account as base,
Where old *Penelops* doubtfull fame,
Selfe Chastity may put to shame?

"I count *Ulysses* happy *Then*,
I deeme our selves as happy *Now;*
His wife denide all other men,
I know them yet that will not bow;
For Chastity I durst compare,
With Greece, with Rome, with who that dare.

"Our English earth such *Angels* breeds,
As can disdaine all *Forraine* prayse,
For *Learning, Wit,* for *sober Deeds,*
All *Europe Dames* may learne their wayes:
Sith I of both may take my choyce,
Out *Not-seene Bird* shall have my voyce.

England for Chastitie may yet compare with any country in the world.

"*Sweete Chastity* shall have my hand,
In England found, though rarely seene,
Rare Chastitie, To this I stand,
Is still as firme, as erst hath beene:
While this *Avisa* is the shee,
This *Chaste desire* shall Victor be."

Conclusion

The *Rose* appeares in *Venus* face,
Vermillion dies pale *Juno's* cheekes,
They both doe blush at this disgrace,
But *Juno* chiefe, something mislikes,
As though she felt some inward touch,
That for her *Greeke* had spoke so much.

FINIS

THOMAS WILLOBY Frater
HENRICI WILLOBY nuper defuncti.

PENELOPE'S COMPLAINT

Or

A Mirrour for wanton

Minions

Taken out of Homer's Odissea
and written in English
Verse
By Peter Colse

Armat spina rosas, mella tegunt apes

LONDON
Printed by *H. Jackson* dwelling in
Fleetstreet, and are to be sold at his
shop under Temple-barre
gate. 1596.

TO THE VERTUOUS AND CHASTE LADIE.

The Ladie Edith, wife of the right worshipfull Sir. Rafe Horsey, knight, increase of all honourable vertues.

Perusing (vertuous Ladie) a Greeke Author, entituled *Odyssea* (written by *Homer* prince of Greeke poets) noting therein, the chast life of the Ladie *Penelope* (in the twentie yeers absence of hir loving lord *Ulysses*) I counterfeited a discourse, in English verses, terming it her Complaint: which treatise comming to the view, of certaine of my special-friends, I was by them oftentimes encited to publish it. At length weying with my selfe, the shipwracke that noble vertue chastitie is subject unto: and seeing an unknowne Author, hath of late published a pamphlet called *Avisa* (over-slipping so many praiseworthy matrons) hath registred the meanest: I have presumed under your Ladiships patronage to commit this my *Penelopes* complaint (though unperfectly portraied) to the presse: not doubting but the Etimologie of so rare a subject, enchased with the Physiognomie of your excellent chastitie: so worthie a conclusion cannot but be a sufficient argument both to abolish *Venus* Idolaters, & also to countervaile the checkes of *Artizans* ill willers, which carpe at al, but correct nothing at al: measuring other mens labours, by their owne idle humors. Thus offering unto your Ladiship the firstlings of my scholers crop, for a satisfaction of my presumption, and hoping you wil pardon my boldnes, and accept of this my proffered service, I commit you to the grace and tuition of the Almightie.

Your Ladiships to commaund
PETER COLSE.

In commendation of the right Worshipfull sir Raufe Horsey knight

S Sweete Muse strike up thy silver string,
I In shrill consort thy shakebut straine,
R Reflecting peales let *Cosmos* ring,
R Resound *Apolloes* piercing vaine:
A Arise and rowse thy selfe with speede
U Use no delay but do the deede.

F Feare not, for *Momus* nor his mates
E Encounter dare with rare renowne,
H Honour with Armes defends the states,
O Of those whom due desert doth crowne:
R Recount at large what trump of fame,
S Sounds in the praise of *Horseis* name.

E Engravde in golden letters write,
Y Your censure sage with due advice:
K Knowne trueth ne snaky envies spite,
N Nor wrath can touch in any wise,
I Into thy Poem though there prie,
G Grose *Zoilus* with squinted eie.

H Harsh and too rude I must confesse
T The Poem is to move delight:
Yet force of duety would no lesse,
But it present in open sight:
For what my wit cannot discharge,
My will surely supplies at large.

His valour daunts the valiant heart,
His wissdome worthy worship winnes,
His perfect zeale by due desart
To highest point of honour climes:
His hand the sword most justly guides,
And therewith causes due decides.

His wit doth Orphanes wrong redresse,
His hand relieves the needy heart,
His word the widowes wo doth ease,
He double doth reward desart
He naught attempts in any case
Whereby he may incurre disgrace.

His chiefest care his countries love.
His chiefest love his countries care,
Whose care considered, well doth prove
His love, the countrey cannot spare:
Whom countriemen do so adore,
That worship never man had more.

To Prince he true lieutenant is,
To common weale a faithfull knight,
Her Grace his service cannot misse,
Nor common weale so worthy a wight.
Whom *Jove* to Prince and subjects joy,
Perserve and keepe from all annoy.
Finis. P. C.

An Encomion upon the right worshipfull Sir Rafe Horsey knight, and the Lady Edith in Saphic verse.

If merites may true honour attaine unto,
Or fame advance worthy renowmed of spring,
Let Muses sound forth triple tuned harpe strings,
unto their honour.

Whose lovely bloud with favourable aspect
Nurture and good fortune enhanceth highly
Unto bright heavens generously springing,
theirs be the glory.

From farre apart those lovely doves did ascend,
Th' one fro th' east with *Phœbus* arose for our good,
Th' other of west where *Coronæus* hardy
camped in old time.

Gentle their gentilitie knightly adorned,
Worthy their worships stately well adopted,
Humble their humanitie highly graced
with lovely nature.

Whose divine deedes and tried hearts true meaning
Duely commented manifest sequences,
Happy doubtlesse, worthy no doubt the titles
of their aliance.

Whose honours unburied I will entombe,
For everlasting ages to looke upon,
Cleare of obscurenesse, free of envies outrage
will I defend them.

Happy my Muses, but unhappy master,
That can advance encomions renowmed
Of others, obscurely lying in hopes grave
buried himselfe.

Yet dying, and dead wil I sing due trophees,
Then triumphs shall stately records eternize,
My Muse shall ever erect monuments to their priase
unto the worldes end.
FINIS P. C.

In comendation of the vertuous, prudent and chaste, virgin, mistris Grace Horsey daughter to the right worshipfull, sir Raph Horsey knight, and the Ladie Edith.

G Glorious Nimph, *Dianaes* darling deere,
R Rose-garland dresse of damaske red and white,
A Adorne thou *Vestaes* shrine, her posies weare,
C Conservde with sweete of honors high delight.
E Enter the Lyons cave, he is thy friend,
T Though Dragon swell, saint *George* shal thee
defend.

H Hunt as *Diana* did, with *Daphne* flie,
O Outrunne *Apollo*, trust not to his rage,
R Repose no trust in *Cupids* deitie,
S Say *Frustra* to his force, make him thy page.
E Enchase thou vertue with pearls of grace,
Y Yongsters may wonder at the enterlace.

What faire? wise? rich? with grace combind?
A joy to al that such a grace behold:
So rare a sympathie is hard to find,
A gift with fame worthie to enrold.
Beauty and chastitie two deadly foes,
Live reconciled in her lovely browes.

Faire: looke on her there dwelleth beauties grace
Wise: her wit the wisest doth abash:
Sweete: where is sweete but in her sweetest face:
Rich: to her store al treasure is but trash.
A Grace she is with such rare graces dight,
Tongue, pen, nor art her grace can shew aright.
FINIS P. C.

PENELOPE'S COMPLAINT

Candido Lectori hexasticon.

En tibi Penelope prudens, & διᾶ γυναικῶν
cuius tot vates nomen ubique canunt.
Si cupis illius niveos cognoscere mores,
hunc parvum placido perlege fronte librum.

Nam de Penelope quœ doctus dixit Homerus:
hic plano & pleno carmine (Lector) habes
JOANNES MAYO

Amico suo charissimo P. C. S. D.

Quid quœrit titulos, quid dotes iactat Avisa.
Anne ea Penelope est œquiparanda tuœ?
Penelope clara est, veneranda fidelis: Avisa
obscura, obscuro fœmina nata loco.

Penelope satrapœ est conjux illustris: Avisa
conjux cauponis, filia pandochei.
Penelope casta est cum sponsus abesset: Avisa
casta suo sponso nocte diéque domi.

Penelopeia annos bis denos mansit: Avisa
tot (vix credo) dies intemerata foret.
Penelopeia procos centum neglexit: Avisa
Vix septem pretium sustinuitque precem,
Penelope nevit, pensum confecit: Avisa
lassauit nunquam pendula tela manus.
Penelope Graijs, Latijs celebratur: Avisa
unus homo laudes, nomen, & acta canit.
Ergo Penelope vigeat, cantetur: Avisa
nullo Penelope est œquivalenda modo.

TO THE READER

Having taken upon me (Gentlemen) to pipe with *Hiparchion*, though my musicke be not melodious inough to content the proud *Thessalians*, yet I doubt not but poore shepheards will stirre their stumps after my minstrelsie. If the stranes be too harsh, to delight your stately eares (pardon me and accept my mind, and not my musicke) I stretch my strings as I can, desiring rather to teach the simple their uniforme cinque pace, then effect Courtiers in their lofty galliards, which alter every day with new devises. The cause I have contrived so pithie a matter in so plaine a stile, and short verse, is: for that a vaine-glorious *Avisa* (seeking by slaunder of her superiors, to eternize her folly) is in the like verse, (by an unknowen Authour) described: I follow (I say) the same stile, & verse, as neither misliking the methode, nor the matter, had it beene applyed to some worthier subject. Thus hoping you wil courteously accept my *Penelopes Complaint*, I wil shortly make you amends with her Will, and Testament, in Pentameters, wherein I wil stretch my wits to Ela, to shew my duetie, and satisfie your desires: and so farewell.

PETER COLSE.

PENELOPE'S COMPLAINT[1]

A Mirrour for Wanton Minions

When Greeks and Trojans fell at strife,
And lords in armour bright were seen;
When many a gallant lost his life
About fair Hellen, beauty's queen;
Ulysses, general so free,
Did leave his dear Penelope.

When she this wofull news did hear,
That he would to the warrs of Troy;
For grief she shed full many a tear,
At parting from her only joy:
Her ladies all about her came
To comfort up this Grecian dame.

Ulysses with a heavy heart,
Unto her then did mildly say,
The time is come that we must part;
My honour calls me hence away;
Yet in my absence, dearest, be
My constant wife Penelope.

Let me no longer live, she sayd,
Than to my lord I true remain;
My honour shall not be betray'd
Until I see my love again;
For I will ever constant prove,
As is the loyal turtle-dove.

Thus did they part with heavy chear,
And to the ships his way he took;
Her tender eyes dropt many a tear;
Still casting many a longing look:
She saw him on the surges glide,
And unto Neptune thus she cry'd:

Thou god, whose power is in the deep
And rulest in the ocean main,
My loving lord in safety keep
Till he return to me again:
That I his person may behold,
To me more precious far than gold.

[1] This is the poem published by Roydon in 1596 under the name of Peter Colse, which name was parodied by Shakespeare as "Peter Quince" in *Midsummer Night's Dream*. The publication of this poem was made at this time to coincide with the second issue of *Willobie his Avisa* with the intention of reinforcing the personal intention and meaning of that poem.

Then straight the ships with nimble sails
  Were all convey'd out of her sight:
Her cruel fate she then bewails,
  Since she had lost her hearts delight.
Now shall my practice be, quoth she,
True vertue and humility.

My patience I will put in ure,
  My charity I will extend;
Since for woe there is no cure,
  The helpless now I will befriend:
The widow and the fatherless
I will relieve when in distress.

Thus she continued year by year
  In doing good to every one;
Her fame was noised every where,
  To young and old the same was known
That she no company would mind,
Who were to vanity inclin'd.

Meanwhile Ulysses fought for fame,
  'Mongst Trojans hazarding his life:
Young gallants hearing of her name,
  Came flocking for to tempt his wife:
For she was lovely young and fair,
No lady might with her compare.

With costly gifts and jewels fine,
  They did endeavour her to win;
With banquets and the choicest wine,
  For to allure her unto sin:
Most persons were of high degree,
Who courted fair Penelope.

With modesty and comely grace
  Their wanton suits she did denye:
No tempting charms could e'er deface
  Her dearest husband's memorye;
But constant she would still remain,
Hopeing to see him once again.

Her book her dayly comfort was,
  And that she often did peruse;
She seldom looked in her glass;
  Powder and paint she ne'er would use.
I wish all ladies were as free
From pride, as was Penelope.

PENELOPE'S COMPLAINT

She in her needle took delight,
And likewise in her spinning-wheel;
Her maids about her every night
Did use the distaff, and the reel:
The spiders, that on rafters twine
Scarce spin a thread more soft and fine.

Sometimes she would bewail the loss
And absence of her dearest love:
Sometimes she thought the seas to cross,
Her fortune on the waves to prove.
I fear my lord is slain, quoth she,
He stays so from Penelope.

At length the ten years siege of Troy
Did end; in flames the city burn'd;
And to the Grecians was great joy,
To see the towers to ashes turn'd:
Then came Ulysses home to see
His constant, dear, Penelope.

O blame her not if she was glad,
When she again her lord had seen.
Thrice-welcome home, my dear, she said,
A long time absent thou hast been:
The wars shall never more deprive
Me of my lord whilst I'm alive.

Fair ladies all, example take;
And hence a worthy lesson learn,
All youthful follies to forsake,
And vice from virtue to discern:
And let all women strive to be
As constant as Penelope.

AN ELEGIE,[1]

OR

FRIENDS PASSION, FOR HIS ASTROPHEL

Written upon the death of the Right Honourable
SIR PHILLIP SIDNEY, KNIGHT,
Lord Governour of Flushing

As then, no winde at all there blew,
No swelling cloude accloid the aire;
The skie, like glasse of watchet hew,
Reflected Phœbus golden haire;
The garnisht tree no pendant stird,
No voice was heard of anie bird.

There might you see the burly Beare,
The Lion king, the Elephant;
The maiden Unicorne was there,
So was Acteons horned plant,
And what of wilde or tame are found,
Were coucht in order on the ground.

Alcides speckled poplar tree,
The palme that Monarchs do obtaine,
With love-juice stained the mulberie,
The fruit that dewes the poets braine;
And Phillis philbert there away,
Comparde with mirtle and the bay.

The tree that coffins doth adorne,
With stately height threatning the skie;
And, for the bed of love forlorne,
The blacke and doleful ebonie:
All in a circle compast were,
Like to an ampitheater.

Upon the branches of those trees,
The airie-winged people sat,
Distinguished in od degrees;
One sort is this, another that,
Here Philomell, that knowes full well,
What force and wit in love doth dwell.

[1] These verses are reprinted here from Spenser's poems, where they are included with other poems written by friends of Spenser's. John Henry Todd, in 1809, proved these verses to be Matthew Roydon's.

This is the poem mentioned by Thomas Nash, in 1587, in his *Address to the Gentlemen Students of Both Universities*, as follows: "Roydon hath shewed himself singular in the immortal epitaph of his beloved Astrophel," etc.

AN ELEGIE

The skie-bred Egle, roiall bird,
Percht there upon an oke above;
The Turtle by him never stird,
Example of immortall love.
  The Swan that sings about to dy,
  Leaving Meander stood thereby.

And, that which was of woonder most,
The Phœnix left sweet Arabie;
And, on a Caedar in this coast,
Built up her tombe of spicerie,
  As I conjecture, by the same
  Preparde to take her dying flame.

In midst and center of this plot,
I saw one groveling on the grasse;
A man of stone, I knew not that:
No stone; of man the figure was,
  And yet I could not count him one,
  More than the image made of stone.

At length I might perceive him reare
His bodie on his elbow end:
Earthly and pale with gastly cheare,
Upon his knees he upward tend,
  Seeming like one in uncouth stound,
  To be ascending out the ground.

A grievous sigh forthwith he throwes,
As might have torne the vitall strings;
Then down his cheeks the teares so flows,
As doth the streame of many springs.
  So thunder rends the cloud in twaine,
  And makes a passage for the raine.

Incontinent, with trembling sound;
He wofully gan to complaine;
Such were the accents as might wound,
And teare a diamond rocke in twaine:
  After his throbs did somewhat stay,
  Thus heavily he gan to say:

O sunne! (said he) seeing the sunne,
On wretched me why dost thou shine?
My star is falne, my comfort done,
Out is the apple of my eine:
  Shine upon those possesse delight,
  And let me live in endlesse night.

O griefe that liest upon my soule,
As heavie as a mount of lead,
The remnant of my life controll,
Consort me quickly with the dead;
  Halfe of this hart, this sprite, and will,
  Di'de in the brest of Astrophill.

And you, compassionate of my wo,
Gentle birds, beasts, and shadie trees,
I am assurde ye long to kno
What be the sorrowes me agreev's;
  Listen ye then to that insu'th.
  And heare a tale of teares and ruthe.

You knew, who knew not Astrophill?
(That I should live to say I knew,
And have not in possession still!)
Things knowne permit me to renew;
  Of him you know his merit such,
  I cannot say, you heare, too much.

Within these woods of Arcadie
He chiefe delight and pleasure tooke,
And on the mountaine Parthenie,
Upon the chrystall liquid brooke,
  The Muses met him ev'ry day
  That taught him sing, to write, and say.

When he descended downe to the mount,
His personage seemed most divine,
A thousand graces one might count
Upon his lovely cheerful eine;
  To heare him speake and sweetly smile,
  You were in Paradise the while.

A sweet attractive kinde of grace,
A full assurance given by lookes,
Continuall comfort in a face,
The lineaments of Gospell bookes;
  I trowe that countenance cannot lie
  Whose thoughts are legible in the eie.

Was never eie did see that face,
Was never eare did heare that tong,
Was never minde did minde his grace,
That ever thought the travell long;
  But eies, and eares, and ev'ry thought,
  Were with his sweete perfections caught.

AN ELEGIE

O God, that such a worthy man,
In whom so rare desarts did raigne,
Desired thus, must leave us than,
And we to wish for him in vaine!
O could the stars that bred that wit,
In force no longer fixed sit!

Then being fild with learned dew,
The Muses willed him to love;
That instrument can aptly shew,
How finely our conceits will move:
As Bacchus opes dissembled harts,
So Love sets out our better parts.

Stella, a Nymph within this wood,
Most rare and rich of heavenly blis,
The highest in this fancie stood,
And she could well demerite this:
Tis likely they acquainted soone;
He was a Sun, and she a Moone.

Our Astrophill did Stella love;
O Stella, vaunt of Astrophill,
Albeit thy graces gods may move,
Where wilt thou finde an Astrophill!
The rose and lillie have their prime,
And so hath beautie but a time.

Although thy beautie do exceed,
In common sight of ev'ry eie,
Yet in his Poesies when we reede,
It is apparant more thereby,
He that hath love and judgement too
Sees more than any other doo.

Then Astrophill hath honored thee;
For when thy bodie is extinct,
Thy graces shall eternall be
And live by vertue of his inke;
For by his verses he doth give
To short-livde beautie aye to live.

Above all others this is hee,
Which erst approoved in his song,
That love and honor might agree,
And that pure love will do no wrong.
Sweet saints! it is no sinne nor blame,
To love a man of vertuous name.

Did never love so sweetly breath
In any mortall brest before,
Did never Muse inspire beneath
A Poets braine with finer store:
He wrote of love with high conceit,
And beautie reard above her height.

Then Pallas afterward attyrde
Our Astrophill with her device,
Whom in his armor heaven admyrde,
As of the nation of the skies;
He sparkled in his armes afarrs,
As he were dight with fierie starrs.

The blaze whereof when Mars beheld,
(An envious eie doth see afar,)
Such majestie (quoth he) is seeld,
Such majestie my mart may mar;
Perhaps this may a suter be,
To set Mars by his deitie.

In this surmize he made with speede
An iron cane, wherein he put
The thunder that in cloudes do breede;
The flame and bolt togither shut
With privie force burst out againe,
And so our Astrophill was slaine.

This word (was slaine) straightway did move,
And natures inward life strings twitch;
The skie immediately above
Was dimd with hideous clouds of pitch,
The wrastling winds from out the ground
Fild all the aire with ratling sound.

The bending trees exprest a grone,
And sigh'd the sorrow of his fall;
The forrest beasts made ruthfull mone,
The birds did tune their mourning call,
And Philomell for Astrophill
Unto her notes annext a phill.

The Turtle dove with tunes of ruthe
Shewd feeling passion of his death;
Me thought she said, I tell thee truthe,
Was never he that drew in breath
Unto his love more trustie found,
Than he for whom our griefs abound.

AN ELEGIE

The swan, that was in presence heere,
Began his funerall dirge to sing:
Good things (quoth he) may scarce appeere,
But passe away with speedie wing.
  This mortall life as death is tride,
  And death gives life; and so he di'de.

The general sorrow that was made,
Among the creatures of each kinde,
Fired the Phoenix where she laide,
Her ashes flying with the winde,
  So as I might with reason see,
  That such a Phœnix nere should bee.

Haply the cinders, driven about,
May breede an offspring neere that kinde
But hardly a peere to that, I doubt;
It cannot sinke into my minde,
  That under branches ere can bee
  Of worth and value as the tree.

The Egle markt with pearcing sight
The mournfull habite of the place,
And parted thence with mounting flight
To signifie to Jove the case,
  What sorrow nature doth sustaine
  For Astrophill by envie slaine.

And while I followed with mine eie
The flight the Egle upward tooke,
All things did vanish by and by,
And disappeared from my looke:
  The trees, beasts, birds, and grove was gone;
  So was the friend that made this mone.

This spectacle had firmly wrought
A deepe compassion in my spright;
My molting hart issude, me thought,
In streames forth at mine eies aright:
  And here my pen is forst to shrinke,
  My teares discollor so mine inke.

THE BALLAD OF CONSTANT SUSANNA[1]

There dwelt a man in Babylon
of reputation great by fame:
He tooke to wife a faire woman,
Susanna she was call'd by name:
Lady, Lady,
Why should we not of her learne thus
to live godly?
Vertuously her life she led,
she feared God, she stood in awe,
As in the story we have read,
was well brought up in *Moses* Law.
Her Parents they were godly folke,
Lady, Lady,
Why should we not then sing and talke,
of this Lady.
That yeare two Judges there was made,
which were the Elders of Babylon,
To *Ioachims* house was at their trade
who was *Susannas* husband then,
Ioachim was a great rich man,
Lady, Lady,
These Elders oft to his house came,
for this Lady,
Ioachim had an Orchard by,
fast ioyning to his house or place,
Where as *Susanna* commonly,
herselfe did daily there solace,
And that these Elders soone had spide,
Lady, Lady,
And privily themselves did hide,
for that Lady,
Her chaste and constant life was tride
by these two Elders of Babylon,
A time convenient they espide,
to have this Lady all alone:
In this Orchard it came to passe,
Lady, Lady,
Where she alone her selfe did wash,
her faire body,
These Elders came to her anon,
and thus they said, Faire dame, God speed,

[1] The Ballad of *Constant Susanna* is republished here from a black letter ballad sheet in the Pepys collection in the Magdalen College library. It is evidently the poem referred to by Matthew Royden in the *Apologie*, and so closely resembles his other work that there can be little doubt of his authorship.

Thy dores are fast, thy maids are gon,
consent to us and doe this deed,
For we are men of no mistrust,
Lady, Lady,
And yet to thee we have a lust,
O faire Lady,
If that to us thou dost say nay,
a testimoniall we will bring,
We will say that one with thee lay,
how canst thou then avoid this sting
Therefore consent to us and turne,
Lady, Lady,
For we to thee in lust doe burne,
O faire Lady.
Then did she sigh, and said, alas,
now woe is me on every side,
Was ever wretch in such a case,
Shall I consent and do this deed?
Whether I doe, or doe it not,
Lady, Lady,
It is my death, right well I wot,
O true Lady.
Better it were for me to fall,
into your hands this day guiltlesse,
Then that I should consent at all
to this your shameful wickednesse,
And even with that (wheras she stood)
Lady, Lady,
Unto the Lord she cryed aloud,
pittifully.
These Elders both likewise againe,
against *Susanna* aloud they cryde,
Their filthy lust could not obtaine,
their wickednes they sought to hide
Unto her friends they then her brought
Lady, Lady,
And with all speed the life they sought
of that Lady,
On the morrow she was brought forth
before the people there to stand,
That they might hear and know the truth,
how these two Elders *Susanna* found
These Elders swore and thus did say
Lady, Lady,
How that they saw a young man lay
with that Lady:

Judgement there was for no offence,
Susanna then causelesse must die:
These Elders bore such evidence,
against her they did verifie,
Who were beleeved then indeed,
Lady, Lady,
Against *Susanna* to proceed,
that she should die.
Susannas friends that stood her by,
they did lament and were full woe,
When as they saw no remedy,
but that to death she then must goe
Susanna then both true and just,
Lady, Lady,
In God was all her hope and trust,
to him did cry.
The Lord her voyce heard and beheld,
the Daughters cry of Israel:
His Spirit he raised in a child,
whose name was cald young *Daniel*
Who cryed aloud whereas he stood,
Lady, Lady,
I am cleare of the guiltlesse blood
of this Lady,
Are you such fooles, quoth *Daniel* then,
in judgment you have not done wel,
Nor yet the right way you have gone,
to judge a Daughter of Israel,
By this witnesse of false disdaine,
Lady, Lady,
Wherefore to iudgement turne againe
for that Lady:
And when to iudgement they were set,
he called for those wicked men,
And soone he did them separate,
putting the one from the other then,
He asked the one where he did see
that faire Lady,
He said under a Mulberry-tree:
who lyed falsly.
Thou lyest said *Daniel*, on thy head
thy sentence is before the Lord:
He bad that forth he might be led,
and bring the other that bore record
To see how they two did agree
for this Lady;

He said under a Pomegranate tree,
who lyed falsly.
Said *Daniel* as he did before,
behold the Messenger of the Lord
Stands wayting for you at the doore,
even for to cut thee with a sword.
And even with that the multitude
aloud did cry,
Give thanks to God: so to conclude
for this Lady;
They dealt like with these wicked men
according as the Scripture saith,
They dealt as with their neighbor then
by *Moses* Law were put to death,
The Innocent preserved was,
Lady, Lady.
As God by *Daniel* brought to passe,
for this Lady.

FINIS

Printed at London for H. Gosson.

A NEW SONET OF PYRAMUS AND THISBIE[1]

You dames (I say) that climbe the mount of Helicon,
Come on with me, and give account what hath been don:
Come tel the chaunce, ye muses all, and dolefull newes,
Which on these lovers did befall, which I accuse.
In Babilon, not long agone, a noble prince did dwell,
Whose daughter bright, dim'd each ones sight, so farre she did excell.
Another lord of high renowne, who had a sonne;
And dwellinge there within the towne, greate love begunne:
Pyramus, this noble Knight, (I tel you true)
Who with the love of Thisbie bright did cares renue.
It came to passe, their secrets was beknowne unto them both:
And then in minde, they place do finde, where they their love unclothe
This love they use long tract of tyme; till it befelle,
At last they promised to meet at prime by Ninus Well;
Where they might lovingly imbrace, in loves delight:
That he might see in Thisbies face, and she his sight.
In joyfulle case, she approached the place where she her Pyramus
Had thought to viewd; but was renewd to them most dolorous.

[1] This poem and a play of the same title (a MS. copy of which is in the British Museum) are parodied in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The verses are palpably Roydon's. The resemblance between them and the verses prefixed to *Willobie his Avisa*, signed "Abell Emet" — which was one of Roydon's numerous pen names — are very marked. It is evident that not only *Willobie his Avisa*, but also all the verses prefixed and affixed to that poem over various signatures, are Roydon's compositions.

Thus, while she staies for Pyramus, there did proceed
Out of the Wood a Lyon fierce, made Thisbie dreed:
And, as in haste she fled awaye, her mantle fine
The lion tare, instead of praie; till that the time
That Pyramus proceeded thus, and see how lion tare
The mantle this, of Thisbie his, he desperately doth fare.
For why? he thought the lion had faire Thisbie slaine:
And then the beast, with his bright blade, he slew certaine.
Then made he mone, and said Alas! (O wretched wight!)
Now art thou in a woeful case for Thisbie bright
Oh! gods above, my faithful love shall never fail this need;
For this my breath, by fatall death, Shal weave Atropos threed.
Then from his sheath he drew his blade, and to his hart
He thrust the point, and life did wade, with painfull smart:
Then Thisbie she from cabin came, with pleasure great;
And to the Well apase she ran, therefor to treat,
And to discusse to Pyramus, of all, her former feares;
And when slaine she found him, truly, she shed forth bitter teares
When sorrow great that she had made, she took in hand
The bloudie knife, to end her life by fatall hand.
You ladies all, peruse and see the faithfulnesse,
How these two lovers did agree to die in distresse.
You Muses waile and do not faile, but still do you lament
These lovers twaine, who with such paine
Did die so well content.

QUEEN DIDO[1]

When Troy towne had, for ten yeeres 'past',
  Withstood the Greekes in manfull wise,
Then did their foes encrease soe fast,
  That to resist none could suffice:
Wast lye those walls, that were soe good,
And corne now growes where Troy towne stoode.

Æneas, wandering prince of Troy,
  When he for land long time had sought,
At length arriving with great joy,
  To mighty Carthage walls was brought;
Where Dido queene, with sumptuous feast,
Did entertain that wandering guest.

[1] *Queen Dido* is reprinted from Percy's Reliques, which version was taken from black letter ballad sheets in the Pepys collection. There is no author's name in either case. It is exactly the kind of subject in which Roydon seems to have delighted. A comparison of its matter and style with Roydon's *Elegy* and *Willobie His Avisa* presents strong evidence of a common authorship.

And as in hall at meate they sate,
The queene desirous newes to heare,
Says, 'of thy Troys unhappy fate
Declare to me thou Trojan deare:
The heavy hap and chance so bad,
That thou, poore wandering prince, hast had.'

And then anon this comelye knight,
With words demure as he cold well,
Of his unhappy ten yeares 'fight',
So true a tale began to tell,
With words soe sweete, and sighs soe deepe,
That oft he made them all to weepe.

And then a thousand sighs he fet,
And every sigh brought teares amaine;
That where he sate the place was wett,
As though he had seene those warrs againe
Soe that the queene, with ruth therefore,
Said, Worthy prince, enough, no more.

And then the darksome night drew on,
And twinkling starres the skye bespread;
When he his dolefull tale had done,
And every one was layd in bedd:
Where they full sweetly tooke their rest,
Save only Dido's boyling brest.

This silly woman never slept,
But in her chamber all alone,
As one unhappye, alwayes wept,
And to the walls shee made her mone;
That she shold still desire in vaine
The thing, she never must obtaine.

And thus in griefe she spent the night,
Till twinkling starres the skye were fled,
And Phœbus, with his glistering light,
Through misty cloudes appeared red;
Then tidings came to her anon,
That all the Trojan shipps were gone.

And then the queene with bloody knife
Did arm her hart as hard as stone
Yet, something loth to loose her life,
In woefull wise she made her mone;
And, rowling on her carefull bed,
With sighes and sobbs, these words she sayd:

O wretched Dido queene! quoth shee
I see thy end approacheth neare;
For hee is fled away from thee,
Whom thou didst love and hold so deare:
What is he gone, and passed by?
O hart, prepare thyself to dye.

Though reason says, thou shouldst forbeare,
And stay thy hand from bloudy stroke;
Yet fancy bids thee not to fear,
Which fetter'd thee in Cupids yoke.
Come death, quoth shee, resolve my smart! —
And with these words shee pierced her hart.

When death had pierced the tender hart
Of Dido, Carthaginian queene;
Whose bloudy knife did end the smart,
Which she sustain'd in mournfull teene;
Æneas being shipt and gone,
Whose flattery caused all her mone;

Her funerall most costly made,
And all things finisht mournfullye;
Her body fine in mold was laid,
Where it consumed speedilye:
Her sisters teares her tombe bestrewde;
Her subjects griefe their kindnesse shewed.

Then was Æneas in an ile
In Grecya, where he stayd long space
Whereas her sister in short while
Writt to him to his vile disgrace;
In speeches bitter to his mind
Shee told him plaine he was unkind.

False-hearted wretch, quoth shee, thou art,
And traitorouslye thou has betraid
Unto thy lure a gentle hart,
Which unto thee much welcome made;
My sister dear and Carthage joy,
Whose folly bred her deere annoy.

Yett on her death-bed when shee lay,
She prayd for thy prosperitye,
Beseeching God, that every day
Might breed thy great felicitye;
Thus by thy meanes I lost a friend;
Heaven send thee such untimely end.

When he these lines, full fraught with gall,
  Perused had, and wayed them right,
His lofty courage then did fall;
  And straight appeared in his sight
Queen Dido's ghost, both grim and pale:
Which made this valiant souldier quaile.

Æneas, quoth this ghastly ghost,
  My whole delight when I did live,
Thee of all men I loved most;
  My fancy and my will did give;
For entertainment I thee gave,
Unthankfully thou didst me grave.

Therefore prepare thy flitting soule
  To wander with me in the aire:
Where deadlye griefe shall make it howle,
  Because of me thou tookst no care:
Delay not time, thy glasse is run,
Thy date is past, thy life is done.

O stay awhile thou lovely sprite,
  Be not so hasty to convay
My soule into eternall night,
  Where itt shall ne're behold bright day
O doe not frowne; thy angry looke
Hath all my soule with horror shooke.

But, woe is me! all is in vaine,
  And bootless is my dismall crye;
Time will not be recalled againe,
  Nor thou surcease before I dye.
O lett me live, and make amends
To some of thy most dearest friends.

But seeing thou obdurate art,
  And wilt no pitye on me show,
Because from thee I did depart,
  And left unpaid what I did owe:
I must content myselfe to take
Whatt lott to me thou wilt partake.

And thus as one being in a trance,
  A multitude of uglye feinds
About this woefull prince did dance,
  He had no helpe of any friends:
His body then they took away.
And no man knew his dying day.

THE BRIDE'S BURIAL[1]

Come mourne, come mourne with mee,
You loyall lovers all;
Lament my loss in weeds of woe,
Whom griping grief doth thrall.

Like to the drooping vine,
Cut by the gardner's knife,
Even so my heart, with sorrow slaine,
Doth bleed for my sweet wife.

By death, that grislye ghost,
My turtle dove is slaine,
And I am left, unhappy man,
To spend my days in paine.

Her beauty late so bright,
Like roses in their prime,
Is wasted like the mountain snowe,
Before warme Phebus' shine.

Her faint red colour'd cheeks
Now pale and wan; her eyes,
That late did shine like crystal stars,
Alas, their light it dies:

Her prettye lilly hands,
With fingers long and small,
In colour like the earthly claye
Yea, cold and stiff withall.

When as the morning-star
Her golden gates had spred,
And that the glittering sun arose
Forth from fair Thetis' bed;

Then did my love awake,
Most like a lilly-flower,
And as the lovely queene of heaven,
So shone shee in her bower.

[1] *The Bride's Burial* is copied from Percy's Reliques. That version was collated from two black letter ballad sheets, both anonymous; one in the British Museum and one in Pepys' collection. Its "griping grief," "grislye ghost," "Phœbus beames," "lilly flowers," "dismal daye," etc., plainly mark it as Roydon's.

THE BRIDE'S BURIAL

Attired was shee then
  Like Flora in her pride,
Like one of bright Diana's nymphs,
  So look'd my lovely bride.

And as fair Helen's face
  Did Grecian dames besmirche,
So did my dear exceed in sight
  All virgins in the church.

When we had knitt the knott
  Of holy wedlock-band,
Like alabaster joyn'd to jett,
  So stood we hand in hand.

Then lo! a chilling cold
  Strucke every vitall part,
And griping griefe, like pangs of death,
  Seiz'd on my true love's heart.

Down in a swoon she fell,
  As cold as any stone;
Like Venus picture lacking life,
  So was my love brought home.

At length her rosye red,
  Throughout her comely face,
As Phœbus beames with watry cloudes
  Was covered for a space.

When with a grievous groane,
  And voice both hoarse and drye,
Farewell, quoth she, my loving friend,
  For I this daye must dye;

The messenger of God
  With golden trumpe I see,
With manye other angels more,
  Which sound and call for mee.

Insteade of musicke sweet,
  Go toll my passing-bell;
And with sweet flowers strow my grave,
  That in my chamber smell.

Strip off my bride's arraye,
  My cork shoes from my feet;
And, gentle mother, be not coye
  To bring my winding-sheet.

My wedding dinner drest,
  Bestowe upon the poor,
And on the hungry, needy, maimde,
  Now craving at the door.

Instead of virgins yong,
  My bride-bed for to see,
Go cause some cunning carpenter,
  To make a chest for mee.

My bride laces of silk
  Bestow'd, for maidens meet,
May fitly serve when I am dead,
  To tie my hands and feet.

And thou my lover true,
  My husband and my friend,
Let me intreat thee here to staye,
  Until my life doth end.

Now leave to talk of love,
  And humblye on your knee,
Direct your prayers unto God:
  But mourn no more for mee.

In love as we have livde,
  In love let us depart;
And I, in token of my love,
  Do kiss thee with my heart.

O staunch these bootless teares,
  Thy weeping tis in vaine;
I am not lost, for wee in heaven
  Shall one day meet againe.

With that shee turn'd aside,
  As one dispos'd to sleep,
And like a lamb departed life:
  Whose friends did sorely weep.

THE BRIDE'S BURIAL

Her true love seeing this,
  Did fetch a grievous groane,
As tho' his heart would burst in twaine,
  And thus he made his moane.

O darke and dismal daye,
  A day of griefe and care,
That hath bereft the sun so bright,
  Whose beams refresht the air.

Now woe unto the world,
  And all that therein dwell,
O that I were with thee in heaven
  For here I live in hell.

And now this lover lives
  A discontented life,
Whose bride was brought unto the grave
  A maiden and a wife.

A garland fresh and faire
  Of lillies there was made,
In sign of her virginitye,
  And on her coffin laid.

Six maidens all in white,
  Did beare her to the ground:
The bells did ring in solemn sort,
  And made a dolefull sound.

In earth they laid her then,
  For hungry wormes a preye:
So shall the fairest face alive
  At length be brought to claye.

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS[1]

My minde to me a kingdom is;
  Such perfect joy therein I finde
As farre exceeds all earthly blisse,
  That God or nature hath assignede:
Though much I want, that most would have,
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

Content I live, this is my stay;
  I seek no more than may suffice:
I presse to beare no haughtie sway;
  Look what I lack my mind supplies.
Loe! thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind doth bring.

I see how plenty surfeits oft,
  And hastie clymbers soonest fall:
I see that such as sit aloft
  Mishap doth threaten most of all:
These get with toile, and keep with feare:
Such cares my mind could never beare.

No princely pompe, nor welthie store,
  No force to winne the victorie,
No wylie wit to salve a sore,
  No shake to winne a lovers eye;
To none of these I yield as thrall,
For why my mind despiseth all.

Some have too much, yet still they crave,
  I little have, yet seek no more;
They are but poore, the much they have;
  And I am rich with little store:
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;
They lacke, I lend; they pine, I live.

I laugh not at anothers losse,
  I grudge not at anothers gaine;
No wordly wave my mind can tosse,
  I brooke that is anothers bane:
I feare no foe, nor fawne on friend;
I lothe not life, nor dread mine end.

[1] These verses have been attributed to Sir Edward Dyer without any good reason. They appear to have been first printed in a book of music entitled *Psalmes, Sonets and Songs of Sadness and Piety*, made into music of five parts, etc., by William Byrd, one of the gentlemen of the Queene's Majesty's Chappell, printed by Thomas East, no date. Another edition of this book has been mentioned as having been published in 1588. There are two anonymous copies of this poem in a slightly different form in the Pepys collection. They bear all the earmarks of Roydon's mind and style.

MY MIND TO ME A KINGDOM IS

I joy not in no earthly blisse;
  I weigh not Cresus' welth a straw;
For care, I care not what it is;
  I feare not fortunes fatall law:
My mind is such as may not move
For beautie bright or force of love.

I wish but what I have at will;
  I wander not to seeke for more;
I like the plaine, I clime no hill;
  In greatest stormes I sitte on shore,
And laugh at them that toile in vaine
To get what must be lost againe.

A SONG TO THE LUTE IN MUSICKE[1]

Where gripings grefes the hart would wounde,
  And dolefulle dumps the mynde oppresse,
There musicke with her silver sound
  With spede is wont to send redresse:
Of trobled mynds, in every sore,
Swete musicke hath a salve in store.

In joye yt maks our mirthe abounde,
  In woe yt cheres our hevy sprites;
Be strawghted heads relyef hath founde,
  By musickes pleasaunte swete delightes:
Our senses all, what shall I say more?
Are subjecte unto musicks lore.

The gods, by musicke have theire prayse;
  The lyfe, the soul therein doth joye:
For as the Romayne poet sayes,
  In seas, whom pyrats would destroy,
A dolphin saved from death most sharpe
Arion playing on his harpe.

O heavenly gyft, that rules the mynd,
  Even as the sterne doth rule the shippe!
O musicke, whom the gods assinde
  To comfort manne, whom cares would nippe!
Since thow both man and beast doest move,
What beste ys he, wyll the disprove?

[1] *A Song to the Lute in Musicke.* In the *Paradise of Dainty Devises* (1596) these verses are credited to Richard Edwards, presumably from the fact that they were set to music of Edwards' composition. Their similarity of meter, idiom and thought to verses known to be Roydon's is very apparent; and the fact that Shakespeare ridicules them in *Romeo and Juliet* (Act IV. Scene 5.) seems definitely to point to Roydon's authorship.

THE SHEPHERD'S SLUMBER[1]

In peascod time, when hound to horn
Gives ear, till buck be killed;
And little lads, with pipes of corn,
Sat keeping beasts afield;
I went to gather strawberries tho,
By woods and groves full fair;
And parched my face with Phœbus so,
In walking in the air,
That down I laid me, by a stream,
With boughs all overclad;
And there I met the strangest dream
That ever Shepherd had.

Methought, I saw each Christmas Game,
Each Revel all and some,
And every thing that I can name,
Or may in fancy come.
The substance of the sights I saw,
In silence pass they shall;
Because I lack the skill to draw
The order of them all.
But Venus shall not pass my pen;
Whose Maidens, in disdain,
Did feed upon the hearts of men,
That Cupid's bow had slain.

And that blind boy was all in blood
Bebathed to the ears;
And like a Conqueror he stood,
And scorned Lovers' tears.
'I have,' quoth he, 'more hearts at call
Than Cæsar could command;
And, like the deer, I make them fall!
That runneth o'er the lawn.
One drops down here! another there!
In bushes as they groan;
I bend a scornful, careless ear,
To hear them make their moan.'

[1] *The Shepherd's Slumber* is printed in Bodenham's *England's Helicon* (1600), where it is subscribed "Ignoto," which word as representing anonymity was used by many writers of that time. Shakespeare undoubtedly refers to and makes fun of these verses in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. On this account and from its close resemblance to Roydon's other work I attribute it to his pen. It is not unlikely that this is the very "sweet song" mentioned in *Nichols' Progresses* as having been presented to Queen Elizabeth during the deer shooting in Cowdray House Park in August, 1594. Shakespeare reproduces the incident and caricatures the verses in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

'Ah, Sir!' quoth Honest Meaning then,
'Thy boylike brags I hear!
When thou hast wounded many a man,
As huntsman doth the deer;
Becomes it thee to triumph so!
Thy mother wills it not;
For she had rather break thy bow,
Than thou shouldst play the sot!'
'What saucy merchant speaketh now?'
Said Venus, in her rage,
'Art thou so blind, thou know'st not how
I govern every age!

'My son doth shoot no shaft in waste!
To me the boy is bound:
He never found a heart so chaste,
But he had power to wound!'
'Not so, fair Goddess!' quoth Free Will,
'In me, there is a choice!
And cause I am of mine own ill;
If I in thee rejoice!
And when I yield myself a slave
To thee, or to thy son;
Such recompense I ought not have!
If things be rightly done.'

'Why, fool!' stepped forth Delight, and said,
'When thou art conquered thus,
Then, lo, Dame Lust, that wanton Maid,
Thy Mistress is, iwus!
And Lust is Cupid's darling Dear!
Behold her, where she goes!
She creeps, the milk-warm flesh so near,
She hides her under close;
Where many privy thoughts do dwell,
A heaven here on earth!
For they have never mind of hell;
They think so much on mirth!'

'Be still, Good Meaning!' quoth Good Sport,
'Let Cupid triumph make!
For, sure, his kingdom shall be short;
If we no pleasure take!
Fair Beauty and her play-feres gay,
The Virgins Vestal too,
Shall sit, and with their fingers play,
As idle people do.

If Honest Meaning fall to frown,
  And I, Good Sport, decay;
Then Venus' glory will come down,
  And they will pine away!'

'Indeed,' quoth Wit, 'this your device,
  With strangeness must be wrought!
And where you see these women nice,
  And looking to be sought;
With scowling brows, their follies check;
  And so give them the fig!
Let Fancy be no more at beck!
  When Beauty looks so big.'
When Venus heard how they conspired
  To murder women so;
Methought, indeed, the house was fired,
  With storms and lightning tho.

The thunderbolts through windows burst;
  And, in their steps, a wight
Which seemed some soul, or sprite, accurst,
  So ugly was the sight:
'I charge you, Ladies all,' said he,
  'Look to yourselves in haste!
For if that men so wilful be,
  And have their thoughts so chaste,
And they can tread on Cupid's breast,
  And march on Venus' face:
Then they shall sleep in quiet rest;
  When you shall wail your case!'

With that, had Venus, all in spite,
  Stirred up the Dames to ire;
And Lust fell cold, and Beauty white
  Sat babbling with Desire;
Whose mutt'ring words I might not mark.
  Much whispering there arose;
The day did lower, the sun waxed dark,
  Away each Lady goes!
But whither went this angry flock,
  Our Lord himself doth know!
Wherewith full loudly crew the cock;
  And I awaked so.

'A dream,' quoth I, 'a dog it is!
  I take thereon no keep!
I gage my head, such toys as this
  Doth spring from lack of sleep!'

IGNOTO.

THE STURDY ROCK[1]

The sturdy rock for all his strength
  By raging seas is rent in twaine:
The marble stone is pearst at length,
  With little drops of drizling rain:
The oxe doth yeeld unto the yoke,
The steele obeyeth the hammer stroke.

The stately stagge, that seems so stout,
  By yalping hounds at bay is set:
The swiftest bird that flies about,
  Is caught at length in fowler's net:
The greatest fish, in deepest brooke,
Is soon deceived by subtill hooke.

Yea man himselfe, unto whose will
  All things are bounden to obey,
For all his wit and worthie skill,
  Doth fade at length and fall away.
There is nothing but time doeth waste;
The heavens, the earth consume at last.

But vertue sits triumphing still
  Upon the throne of glorious fame:
Though spiteful death mans body kill,
  Yet hurts he not his vertuous name:
By life or death what so betides,
The state of vertue never slides.

[1] *The Sturdy Rock* is subscribed "M. T." in the *Paradise of Dainty Devises* (1596). There is no record of any poet of that date with these initials. May the initials not be a misprint for "M. R."? The verses can be matched almost line for line in *Willobie his Avisa*. I have little hesitation in attributing them to Roydon.

VERSES FROM "THE PASSIONATE PILGRIM"

16[1]

Whenas thine eye hath chose the dame,
And stalled the deer that thou wouldst strike,
Let reason rule things worthy blame,
As well as fancy, partial might.
  Take counsel of some wiser head,
  Neither too young, nor yet unwed.

And when thou com'st thy tale to tell,
Smooth not thy tongue with filèd talk,
Lest she some subtle practice smell;
(A cripple soon can find a halt)
  But plainly say thou lov'st her well,
  And set thy person forth to sell.

And to her will frame all thy ways;
Spare not to spend,—and chiefly there
Where thy desert may merit praise,
By ringing always in her ear:
  The strongest castle, tower, and town,
  The golden bullet beats it down.

Serve always with assurèd trust,
And in thy suit be humble, true;
Unless thy lady prove unjust,
Press never thou to choose anew:
  When time shall serve, be thou not slack
  To proffer, though she put thee back.

[1] These verses are reprinted from *The Passionate Pilgrim*, which was issued under Shakespeare's name in 1599. This book was fathered on Shakespeare by Roydon in this year to coincide with his intended issue of *Willobie his Avisa* at the same time, and the verses above included and imputed to Shakespeare to lend color to the story he tells in that poem of Shakespeare's relations with the Earl of Southampton. Roydon untruthfully depicts the poet as pandering to the nobleman. Two of Shakespeare's Sonnets and several verses from *Love's Labour's Lost* are also included in order to palm off the whole collection as Shakespeare's. It is probable that these verses are a portion of the suppressed *Willobie his Avisa* of 1596. They are identical in theme with the Cantos in which H. W. and W. S. are introduced.

Upon the third issue of *The Passionate Pilgrim* in 1612 with Shakespeare's name as author upon the title page, he protested at the unwarranted use of his name, when the title page was cancelled, and a new one substituted with his name eliminated. Malone's copy of this poem, which is now in the Bodleian Library, contains both the original and the substituted page.

What though her frowning brows be bent,
Her cloudy looks will clear ere night;
And then too late she will repent,
That she dissembled her delight;
  And twice desire, ere it be day,
  That with such scorn she put away.

What though she strive to try her strength,
And ban and brawl, and say thee nay,
Her feeble force will yield at length,
When craft hath taught her thus to say:
  'Had women been so strong as men,
  In faith you had not had it then.'

The wiles and guiles that women work,
Dissembled with an outward show,
The tricks and toys that in them lurk,
The cock that treads them shall not know.
  Have you not heard it said full oft,
  A woman's nay doth stand for nought?

Think women love to match with men,
And not to live so like a saint:
Here is no heaven; they holy then
Begin, when age doth them attaint.
  Were kisses all the joys in bed,
  One woman would another wed.

But soft; enough,—too much I fear,
For if my lady hear my song,
She will not stick to wring mine ear,
To teach my tongue to be so long:
  Yet will she blush, here be it said
  To hear her secrets so bewrayed.

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